

The University of Chicago

A HISTORY OF THE TEACHING OF
BEGINNING READING

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED
TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1935

By

HAROLD BOYNE LAMPORT

Private Edition, Distributed by
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARIES
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study has been to trace the development of progress in dealing with the problem of teaching children to read. Because of the vastness of the field covered, the present study is focused particularly upon the introductory stages of reading instruction, and is concerned with advanced procedure only when it has a direct bearing upon the conditions affecting beginners. Furthermore, this account deals with developments before 1900, since there are already available several treatises and summaries which adequately cover the developments of the twentieth century.

Justification for the Study

Hundreds of books and articles have dealt in one way or another with the subject of reading. Many of them have been concerned primarily with the teaching of beginners. Yet nowhere, so far as is known to the writer, is there any complete survey of the objectives, methods, and materials that have had to do in times past with beginning reading.

There have been, it is true, several discussions of the historical development of reading methods and materials. The outstanding one, now thirty-five years old, by R. R. Reeder,¹ has been widely quoted by many other writers in the field, and is much broader in scope and more limited in treatment than is the present study. There are also several books on methods of in-

¹The Historical Development of School Readers and Method in Teaching Reading. New York: Columbia University, 1900.

struction which contain chapters dealing with historical backgrounds. While several of these accounts deal in brief with beginning reading, most of them are equally concerned with upper grade procedure, and treat the subject in a superficial or general way.

It is felt, therefore, that the present study will fill a real need in educational literature by presenting a carefully documented account of the development of motives, methods and materials for teaching beginners. One does not realize at the outset, the inheritance America has received from Europe in this connection. An investigation of the contribution of early educators in Greece, Rome, England, France, Germany, and other countries, as well as in colonial America, to our present day theory and practice, shows that these men too had their brilliant ideas, and were zealous and conscientious in their efforts to give children a good educational foundation. This account should give us a sense of perspective, and a realization of the need for carefully considering methods and materials proposed for introduction in our schools today.

Sources of Information

The research upon which this dissertation is based has been carried on chiefly in reference libraries. Source material has been obtained from eight colleges and universities, five city libraries, the Michigan State Library, and the Library of Congress. The appended bibliography lists in detail the sources utilized. Several types of materials will be noted: 1. Educational periodicals, covering the period 1818 to 1900. Most helpful of these has been Barnard's American Journal of Education, which contains many descriptions of early practices and theories.

2. The Yearbooks of learned societies, such as the American Institute of Instruction, The Herbart Society, and the National Society for the Study of Education.
3. Reports of the Proceedings of Professional Organizations, such as the National Education Association.
4. Reports of the United States Commissioner of Education.
5. Reports of state and city educational officers.
6. Miscellaneous committee reports to public or semi-public organizations, such as the American Lyceum.
7. Professional books on teaching.
8. Textbooks prepared for pupils' use.
9. Teachers' manuals to accompany textbooks.
10. Treatises on children's books.
1. Histories of Education.
12. Encyclopedias.
13. General Catalogs, such as those of the British Museum, and French Department of Education.
14. Publishers' Catalogs.
15. Bibliographies.

Method of Procedure

The documentary or historical method of research has been followed. The early nineteenth century was taken as a point of reference, and a careful study of early periodical literature made to determine trends at that time. To trace to their origin the outstanding theories and practices of a century ago, became the first major objective of the study. This involved the reading of early treatises on education, and an examination of copies of books utilized in teaching beginners to read. This phase of the study was carried on chiefly in the Library of Congress, particularly in the rare book division. Much of the account of early methods in Germany and France is based upon treatises in the languages of these countries; more has been obtained from standard English or American translations.

The purpose of Part One is to make clear the general

objectives, methods of teaching, materials available for children, and the underlying philosophy of education which characterized the European contribution to beginning reading prior to 1830, when the Educational Revival in America began.

The second part of the study deals with developments in America. A study of early periodical literature and reports furnished a general view of conditions in this country a century ago, and the new movements destined to bring about a change. The professional books on teaching, which marked the early American period, were critically examined, and references to primary reading noted. Several hundred school books in the collection of the Library of Congress, the University of Michigan, Henry Ford's Edison Institute at Dearborn, and other libraries, were examined to determine the kind of material presented, and the method of instruction advocated. Information thus secured was analyzed and grouped according to the general chapter classifications. Wherever pertinent, excerpts from these sources were made, many of which are included in the present discussion.

Throughout the study, there has been a definite attempt to show how the general conditions under which the child's education was carried on, affected the teaching of reading. Then as now, progress in learning to read was dependent to a great extent upon school environment, the type of teacher involved, parental attitude, and many other considerations which affected interest and effort.

Extensive use has been made of photostatic copies of certain sections of rare books, not otherwise available. Several of the prints have been included in this dissertation for purposes of illustration.

CHAPTER II

TRADITIONAL MOTIVES FOR TEACHING READING

Motives for teaching reading must be considered both from the point of view of the adult who attaches definite values to the art of reading and desires his child to acquire them, and from the standpoint of the child confronted with the necessity of applying himself to the actual learning process. A survey of such motives over a period of several centuries, brings to light several which are outstanding.

The Greeks subordinated the child to the state. The Spartans aimed to make him a Stoic, and placed little emphasis upon intelligent achievement. The Athenians expected the good citizen to be a philosopher. They were not agreed as to whether education should give greater attention to intellectual or moral virtue, but felt that in either case a knowledge of the writings of poets and philosophers would contribute to good citizenship.¹ According to Aristotle, reading and writing should be taught also, because other sorts of knowledge might be acquired through them.² Motives in Greece appear to have been both utilitarian and cultural.

Rome placed great stress upon preparing her youth to become orators. Education for this goal required careful training in the art of reading in order to provide an acquaintance with the sayings of eminent men. Quintilian, best known of the Roman writers on education, gave special consideration in his Institutes of Oratory (A. D. 79) to the subject of teaching beginners to

¹Aristotle, Politica, viii. 1337 b. Translation by Jowett in W. D. Ross, The Works of Aristotle, Vol. X. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921.

²Ibid., p. 1338 b.

read, and many of his pronouncements are still widely accepted. Through reading the child might receive both general information and moral instruction.¹ Plutarch likewise, in his treatise on the training of children, advocated that they read the writings of ancient authors and make collections of them, "as husbandmen are wont to do of all useful tools," to enable them to derive knowledge from its proper fountains.²

Education in the Early Middle Ages prepared children either for the chivalric life of the castle and tournament, or for the spiritual Christian life of the church. The knight's training was mostly physical; that of the churchman, intellectual but narrow and formal. The life of the former placed no premium on the ability to read and write; that of the monk or priest, with its scholastic emphasis, made reading and writing imperative. The spread of Roman schools throughout Europe and the ultimate Christianization of the Empire, made Latin the dominant language of the early church. More and more, learning to read came to be regarded as a preparation for the intensive life of the monastic orders. From the fifth to the thirteenth century the teaching of reading was almost completely in the hands of the churchmen, and was concentrated upon instruction in the Latin tongue. Later, however, various forms of vernacular schools developed to meet practical demands.³

The ideals of the Renaissance led teachers to turn to ancient learning again for the content and method of education.

¹Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory i. 1. 17, 18. 36. Trans. John S. Watson. London: Bell & Co., 1882.

²Plutarch, "Of the Breeding of Children." Trans. Simon Ford, Plutarch's Morals, I, 23. London: John Gillibrand, 1684.

³C. S. Parker, The History of Modern Elementary Education, chap. 11. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912.

Latin became the language of the scholar, the diplomat, the gentleman, the merchant, and even the craftsman. But since only the specially privileged had access to the valuable manuscripts of that day, the ability to read was possessed by but a comparatively small number of individuals and was regarded by those outside the clergy as a mark of social distinction. Parents who wished their children to appear cultured and scholarly had them taught to read.

This objective of producing a few scholars able to appreciate the classics of Greece and Rome, according to Quick,

. . . . led the schoolmasters to attach little importance to the education of children. Directly their pupils were old enough for Latin Grammar, the schoolmasters were quite at home; but till then the children's time seemed to them of small value, and they neither knew nor cared how to employ it. If the little ones could learn by heart forms of words which would afterward come in useful, the schoolmasters were ready to assist such learning by unsparing application of the rod, but no other learning seemed worthy even of a caning. Absorbed in the world of books, they overlooked the world of nature. No wonder that they had so little sympathy with children, and did not know how to teach them.¹

An accompaniment of the Revival of Learning was a revival in commerce, industry, and business, with the ultimate rise of new social classes and guilds, for whose education there developed a system of guild schools emphasizing training in the vernacular. As the middle class grew in political power, it demanded and secured independent schools suited to the needs of its members. With the advent of printed books, the first of which appeared in 1456, the opportunity for reading was extended to a larger number of people, and books in the vernacular rapidly appeared. The invention of printing and paper so cheapened the cost of books that it is said that by 1500, a book could be purchased for fifty

¹ R. H. Quick, Essays on Educational Reformers, p. 9. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1890.

cents, which a half century before would have cost fifty dollars.¹ This development opened the way for the textbook method of teaching, and made the art of reading a great accomplishment. The commercial motive for reading grew rapidly in importance, especially in the larger cities. In the smaller communities, however, there was little instruction, nor was there any great demand for it.²

With the Protestant Reformation, came a different reason for teaching reading. The translation of the New Testament into German by Luther in 1522, and into English by Tyndale in 1526, gave new impetus to the study of the scriptures. It was the Protestant insistence upon the right of individuals to read and interpret the Bible for themselves that established the religious motive for learning to read in the vernacular. In the reorganized schools of northern Germany, in particular, training was provided for children of the common people in reading, writing, singing, religion, and the rudiments of a trade or household duties.³ In these schools the motive for reading was clearly a religious one, yet different from that of the early monastic schools, where the vocational aspect of church life made the study of manuscripts necessary.

From the twelfth century on, the spirit of scientific inquiry slowly permeated the European centers of learning.

¹E. P. Cubberley, The History of Education, p. 257. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920.

²E. Nohle, History of the German School System, Report of U. S. Commissioner of Education, I, 23-6. Washington: United States Department of the Interior, 1897.

³Martin Luther, "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of All the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools," 1524. F. V. N. Painter, Luther on Education, p. 198. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889.

Francis Bacon (1561-1620) formulated the inductive method and insisted that knowledge should no longer be the chief end of learning, but that the process of acquiring it should be emphasized. Bacon's advocacy of the study of nature rather than the traditional humanistic subject matter, was largely responsible for the movement in education known as realism.

The fundamental principle of realism, that of teaching knowledge which would be useful in everyday life, led definitely to new motives for teaching reading. By means of reading, children would become acquainted with things rather than abstract ideas, and gain added information about their environment. While the early realists believed thoroughly in religious instruction, they did not confine education to it alone, and slowly but surely practical subject matter found its way into reading material prepared for children.

Before the seventeenth century, there were no real books for children. There were, to be sure, a few primers, spelling books, and guides to children's conduct, but all of them were didactic and intended to impose adult views upon the young. Fables and moral tales, of which a few collections had been prepared for adults, were occasionally read to children because of the moral precepts presented.

With the publication of Perrault's tales in 1694,¹ there began a body of literature for children which was justified entirely on the ground that it amused or interested them. The development of such literature received great impetus, after the middle of the eighteenth century, from the publishing activities

¹Charles Perrault, "Contes de ma Mere L'Oye," originally published as Part V of *Recueil des Pièces Curieuses et Nouvelles*. The Hague: A. Moetjens, 1694.

of John Newbery of London. It is a significant fact that he set out openly to provide amusement for children through reading, and that he made instruction and information secondary to pleasure. To secure the best results the child needed to read for himself.

Thus from the standpoint of the adult, the motive for teaching reading might be civic, cultural, religious, commercial, realistic, or recreational. The child, on the other hand, desired to read sometimes because he found it interesting, sometimes because it appeared useful to him, sometimes because he was rewarded or honored for his accomplishment, but most often, probably, because he was punished if he did not conform to the desires of his elders in the matter. From the Age of Pericles to the nineteenth century, the teacher was usually represented as the wielder of the rod and ferule. Learning to read, for most children, was accepted as bitter medicine. The evolution of the modern idea that the introductory stages of learning should be made pleasant to the child, will be discussed further in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

EARLY EFFORTS TO MAKE LEARNING TO READ APPEAL TO CHILDREN

From the Age of Pericles to the nineteenth century, the general objective of elementary education as popularly conceived was preparation for adult life. As a miniature adult, the child was expected to imitate the ways of adults. Changes in society came about very slowly, and the aim and purpose of education varied but slightly from generation to generation.

In early Christian schools, preparation for adult life took second place to preparation for the life to come. In such schools the child's instincts and natural desires, his personal interests, and his immediate needs were set aside or repressed. In some quarters, the more distasteful the procedure followed, the more educative it was considered. The discipline of the mind and body continued for centuries to be a prominent objective, even with beginners at school.

It is the purpose of this chapter to present some of the early efforts to approach the problem of teaching beginners in a different way. Attention will be directed to (1) the replacement of repressive discipline by rewards and emulation; (2) emphasis upon play and games in teaching reading; (3) the use of dramatization in motivating learning; (4) the beginnings of pictorial illustration; and (5) the introduction of content interesting to children.

The abandonment of repressive discipline in schools came slowly. A long line of famous educators advocated such a change, prominent among them being men like Plutarch,¹ Quintilian,²

¹Plutarch, Morals i. 25. Trans. Simon Ford. London: John Gellibrand, 1684.

²Quintilian, Institutes of Oratory i. 1. 20, 22. Trans. H. E. Butler. London: Wm. Heineman, 1920.

St. Jerome,¹ Erasmus,² Luther,³ Montaigne,⁴ Comenius,⁵ Locke,⁶ and the Jesuits.⁷ Yet even a century ago, in both Europe and America, the fear of punishment still led most children to undertake to learn reading. The repressive influence of Calvinism, with its reactionary effect upon education, and the social life of the French Court, with its artificial conventionalities for children, were powerful influences in establishing severe methods in America.⁸ The eighteenth century brought advocates of reform in such educators as Rousseau,⁹ Pestalozzi,¹⁰ and Basedow,¹¹ but conditions at school in 1800 were far from pleasant for children.

¹St. Jerome, "Letter to Laeta." Trans. W. H. Fremantle, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, VI, 191. New York: Christian Literature Co., 1893.

²Desiderius Erasmus, "Dialog De Pronun," Op. 1, 929 A, in W. H. Woodward, Concerning the Aim and Method of Education. Cambridge: University Press, 1904.

³F. V. N. Painter, Luther on Education, p. 155. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889.

⁴M. Montaigne, The Education of Children, p. 61. Trans. L. E. Rector. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1899.

⁵J. A. Comenius, The Great Didactic, chap. xxvi, sec. 4. Trans. M. W. Keatinge. London: A. & C. Black, 1896.

⁶John Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education, par. 148. Cambridge: University Press, 1880.

⁷R. H. Quick, Educational Reformers, p. 43. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1890.

⁸H. A. Taine, The Ancient Regime, p. 137. New York: Henry Holt, 1896.

⁹J. J. Rousseau, Emile, p. 54. Trans. W. H. Payne. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1892.

¹⁰W. S. Monroe, Comenius and the Beginnings of Educational Reform, p. 154. New York: Scribners, 1900.

¹¹Karl Kehr, Geschichte des Leseunterrichts, p. 59. Gotha: E. F. Theinemann, 1889.

The introduction of play and games in teaching beginners was undertaken by the Greeks¹ and Romans,² and advocated later by such famous educators as St. Jerome,³ Vittorino da Feltre,⁴ and Erasmus.⁵ John Locke was especially influential in convincing teachers of the value of play.⁶ Basedow's Philanthropinum made much of it.⁷ Froebel, in the early nineteenth century, took an advanced position regarding the educational value of play,⁸ and was most influential of all the European writers in molding American practices. Of the famous educators, Pestalozzi was exceptional in that he feared the effects of stressing the play motive with beginners.⁹

Dramatization as a method of teaching reading was not widely used prior to the last century. There are evidences that the Greeks used it.¹⁰ Comenius prepared a dramatic version of

¹Plato, Republic vii. 536. Trans. B. Jowett, Plato's Dialogues. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871.

²Quintilian, op.cit. i. 26.

³St. Jerome, "Letter to Laeta," in Fremantle, op.cit., p. 191.

⁴W. H. Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanistic Educators, p. 194. Cambridge: University Press, 1897.

⁵Desiderius Erasmus, De Pueris Instituendis, 512 E. Trans. D. Knight in Barnard's American Journal of Education, XVI (March, 1866), 681.

⁶Locke, op.cit., par. 149.

⁷Barnard's American Journal of Education, V (September, 1858), 497.

⁸Friedrich Froebel, The Education of Man, chap. i. Trans. W. H. Hailman. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1893.

⁹J. H. Pestalozzi, Letters to Graeves, XXX. Syracuse: J. W. Bardeen, 1898.

¹⁰Athenaeus, The Deipnosophists, x. 453. Trans. G. B. Gulick, IV, 555. London: Wm. Heinemann, 1930.

his Janua,¹ and several believers in the phonic method recommended the impersonation of animals as a means of teaching basic sounds.

The use of pictorial illustrations came even before the invention of printing. Many early versions of Aesop's fables were illustrated.² Illustrated ABC books and primers appeared during the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century attention shifted to spelling books, which contained less religious content than the primers, and illustrations were common in most of them, even though they were not always particularly worthwhile. Among the educators who contributed much to the movement for illustrating children's books the names of Lubinus,³ Comenius,⁴ Locke,⁵ Basedow,⁶ and Newbery⁷ are especially significant.

Several men sought to make reading more appealing to children through the choice of interesting subject matter. In the fifteenth century, there developed a movement to begin early instruction in the mother tongue rather than the Latin. This move-

¹M. W. Keatinge, The Great Didactic of Comenius, pp. 79-80. London: A. & C. Black, 1896.

²A. W. Pollard, Early Illustrated Books, p. 41. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1893.

³E. Lubinus, The True and Ready Way to Teach the Latin Tongue, pp. 220-3. London, 1644. Trans. S. Hartlib in Quick, op.cit., p. 167.

⁴J. A. Comenius, The Orbis Sensualism Pictus. Trans. Charles Hoole. London, 1659.

⁵Locke, op.cit., par. 156.

⁶Johannes Basedow, Elementarwerk. Reprint, F. Chodowiecke. Frankfurt am Main: Voigtlander Tetzner, 1922.

⁷Charles Welsh, A Bookseller of the Last Century. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1885.

ment was assisted by Luther,¹ Ratke,² and Comenius³ in Germany; by Montaigne⁴ and St. Cyran⁵ in France; by Mulcaster⁶ and the Realists in England. After 1700 many children had their early reading lessons in the vernacular.

The trend toward realistic subject matter was given considerable impetus by the arguments of Bacon.⁷ Advocates of this practice included many famous educators, chief of whom were Ratke⁸ and Comenius⁹ in Germany; Hoole,¹⁰ Dury,¹¹ and Petty¹² in England. In the seventeenth century there appeared several books for children containing such materials, most famous of which was the Orbis

¹Painter, op.cit., p. 147.

²Wolfgang Ratke, Methodus Institutionis Nova. Leipzig: Rhenius, 1617. Quoted in Quick, op.cit., p. 108.

³J. A. Comenius, The Great Didactic, chap. xxix, sec. 10. Trans. Keatinge, op.cit.

⁴Montaigne, op.cit., p. 76.

⁵Quick, op.cit., p. 184.

⁶James Oliphant, Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster, p. 35. Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1903.

⁷E. P. Gubberley, The History of Education, p. 433. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1920.

⁸Karl Von Raumer, "Wolfgang Ratich," Barnard's American Journal of Education, V (June, 1858), 244-50.

⁹J. A. Comenius, The Orbis Sensualism Pictus. Trans. Charles Hoole. London, 1659.

¹⁰Charles Hoole, A New Discovery in the Old Art of Teaching. London: Andrew Crook, 1660. Reprint. Syracuse: C.W. Bardeen, 1912.

¹¹John Dury, the Reformed Schoole, p. 38. London: Richard Wodnothe, 1649.

¹²Wm. Petty, The Advice of W.P. to Mr. S. Hartlib. London, 1649. Reprinted in H. Barnard's Papers for the Teacher, Fifth Series. Philadelphia: Lippincott Co., 1862.

Pictus of Comenius. Comenius also did much to popularize the application of realistic philosophy to the teaching of children. In The Great Didactic he advocated the better selection of subject matter and its more careful gradation; emphasis upon the vernacular and the realities of life; learning by observation, action, and use rather than by precept; the recognition of experience as the necessary basis of all real knowledge; and in particular the use of the senses in the acquisition of information whenever they could be directly employed. The Great Didactic and the Orbis Pictus rank high among the influential publications of educational history. Comenius undoubtedly did more than any other individual to establish the use of realistic material in reading books.

The introduction of spelling books in the early eighteenth century opened the way for the presentation of a wider range of subject matter, and while religious topics were predominant until well after the American Revolution, a variety of new material found its way into books for beginners.

Fables and moral tales were in common use among the Greeks and Romans, but had been set aside during the Middle Ages as opposed to Christian teachings. Following the Renaissance, and the invention of printing, selections of this kind began to reappear, and their use with children was endorsed by Luther, Montaigne, Locke, and others. The fables of Aesop,¹ Ovid,² Phaedrus,³ and the moral tales of Cato⁴ enjoyed a period of

¹Pollard, op.cit., p. 225.

²Montaigne, op.cit., p. 81.

³Oscar Browning, Educational Theories, p. 129. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882.

⁴Wm. Smith, Dictionary of Greek and Latin Biography, I, 635. London: John Murray, 1890.

popularity during the seventeenth century. Especially in England did the moral tale reach a notable development. Representing as it did a reaction against the extreme position of Puritannical religion, it aimed to guide the child in the way of respectable morality. The moralists of the late eighteenth century were on the whole extremely didactic, but occasionally a writer appeared who was able to challenge the interest of children. Best known in this field were Maria Edgeworth and Arabella Argus.¹

Fairy tales and Mother Goose rhymes likewise found their way into children's literature. Perrault's tales, of which "Red Riding Hood" is typical, appeared first in 1694,² and Mother Goose jingles came into use shortly afterward,³ although it was late in the nineteenth century before they reached their greatest popularity.

The influence of Rousseau is to be seen in another type of stories, written especially for beginners, dealing with simple natural incidents, instead of tales of monsters and impossible adventures. Prominent among the authors of such material were Mrs. Anna Barbauld,⁴ Mrs. Trimmer,⁵ Madame de Genlis,⁶ and Thomas

¹Mrs. E. M. Field, The Child and His Book, p. 250.
London: Gardner, Darton & Co., 1895.

²Charles Perrault, Contes de ma Mere L'Oye. Originally published as Vol. V of A. Moetjens, Recueil des Pièces Curieuses et Nouvelles. The Hague, 1694.

³Mother Goose's Melodies. London: J. Newbery, 1760.

⁴Grace Oliver, Life of Mrs. Barbauld, p. 86. Boston: Cupples, Upham & Co., 1874.

⁵F. J. Rivington, Life and Writings of Mrs. Trimmer, p. 43.
London: Law and Gilbert, 1814.

⁶Madame la Comtesse de Genlis, Les Veillées du chateau, ou Cours de Morale a l'usage des enfants, par l'auteur d'Adèle et Theodore. Paris: M. Lambert, 1782.

Day,¹ selections from whose writings frequently were used in the readers of the nineteenth century.

Thus four distinct types of juvenile stories were available before 1800, as substitutes for the distinctly religious content of children's primers. Fairy tales and folk stories, nursery rhymes and jingles, fables and moral tales, and realistic nature stories all had been put into childish language. First the spellers, then the ABC books, and finally the primers and primary readers incorporated such materials in their contents.

¹Thomas Day, The History of Sandford and Merton. Second Edition. London: J. Stockdale, 1784.

CHAPTER IV

SPECIFIC METHODS OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN THAT INFLUENCED EARLY AMERICAN PRACTICES IN TEACHING BEGINNING READING

There are two fundamental methods of teaching reading,-- the synthetic, which proceeds from letters or sounds to words and sentences; and the analytic, which begins with pictures, words, or sentences, and breaks them into the component elements. Historically, the synthetic methods came first, and predominated from the Age of Pericles to the middle of the nineteenth century. In this chapter, attention is directed to the origin of several different methods and their early development in Europe, in order to make clear the procedure inherited by American schools of a century ago. Later chapters will trace the evolution of methods in this country.

The Alphabet Method

Among the early people who had an alphabet, each letter was used to indicate a definite sound, hence the letters assumed much greater significance than at present, and it was necessary to give considerable attention to them in learning to read. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, describing the Greek method, wrote:

We first learn the names of the letters, then their forms and length, then syllables and their usual variations. Then we begin to read and write, but syllable by syllable and slowly until we have acquired some facility, then connectedly, as we choose. . . . As time goes on, we read any book at sight, without reference to the rules.¹

Plato gives an interesting description of a reading class:

. . . . When children are beginning to know their letters, (they should) easily recognize the several letters in very

¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *de Admiranda vi dicendi in Demosthene*, chap. 52. ed. H. Usener and L. Radermacher (Leipzig: Teubner, 1899), I, 242.

short and easy syllables, (and be) able to tell them to you correctly, whereas in the longer and more difficult syllables they do not recognize them, and think falsely of them.

Under such circumstances,

. . . . the best and easiest way of guiding them to the letters they do not as yet know (is) to refer them to the same letters in the words they know, and to compare these to the letters that they do not know and show that they are the same, and have the same character in the different combinations, until the letters which they do not know have all been placed side by side with the letters which they do know. In this way they have examples and are made to learn every letter in every combination.¹

There seems to have been no essential difference in the technique employed by the Greeks and Romans except that the Romans began with younger children. Quintilian, the outstanding Roman authority on methods, has left us a definite description.

The smaller children strive to learn the elements and syllables; and one of the older ones repeats them to them clearly and one at a time; so that it is particularly necessary to have regard to the elocution of teachers and of the older scholars.²

Quintilian then goes on to describe the procedure thus:

. . . . Let the pupil then begin to form syllables into words, and words into periods. The prejudice that hurry does to reading is inconceivable. It gives rise to doubts, stammering, and repetitions, in those who attempt more than they can compass; and when they are once out, they are diffident even of the things they are masters of. Let the pupil therefore begin with reading syllables, then let him join them into words and sentences, but let him be all the time slow and sure, until by practice he arrives at a correct quickness.³

St. Jerome's advocacy of the Roman method was responsible for its use in the church schools of the middle ages, and its introduction into all the countries where Latin was the preferred

¹Plato, Politicus, par. 278. In Plato's Dialogues. Trans. B. Jowett, III, 562. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871.

²Quintilian, Institutes of Eloquence, i. 15, 16. A.D. 88. Trans. W. Guthrie. London: R. Dulton, 1755, 1805.

³Ibid.

language. Thus the alphabetic method became the accepted custom in Germany, France, Holland and England. When these peoples began to substitute instruction in the vernacular for instruction in the ancient languages, they used the alphabetic-syllabic-spelling approach.

Its application to the English language was encouraged by Coote's English Schoole-Master (1596)¹ and Brinsley's Ludus Literarius (1612),² which gave detailed rules for procedure. Both stressed spelling before reading, and made much of the medieval rules for syllabification. By 1660 the AB - ab introduction to reading in English was definitely formalized. Charles Hoole, a London schoolmaster, thus summarized the technique of that time.

If after the child knows his letters, he be taught to gather them together in just syllables, and by the joining of syllables together to form words (which as it is the most ancient, so certainly is it the most natural way of teaching), he will soon be able if he stick at any word in reading, by the naming of the letters and pronouncing of its syllables, to say what it is, and then he may boldly venture to read without spelling at all.³

Much the same procedure was followed in the schools of France, under LaSalle, and in eighteenth century German schools approved by Frederick the Great.⁴ It is not surprising, therefore, that our American forefathers considered the alphabet method entirely proper and adequate.

¹Edward (Edmund) Coote, The English Schoole-Master. London: Printed for the Company of Stationers. 24th Edition, 1635.

²John Brinsley, Ludus Literarius, or the Grammar Schoole. (1612) Reprint, London: Constable & Co., 1917.

³Charles Hoole, The Petty Schoole (1660), p. 49. Reprint, Syracuse: C. W. Bardeen, 1912.

⁴E. H. Reisner, The Evolution of the Common School, p. 89. New York: Macmillan Co., 1932.

The Phonic Method

The phonic method is based on the principle that since the sounds rather than the names of the letters, uttered rapidly, produce the word, teaching should begin with the sounds. By this method, therefore, the child first learns the basic sounds of the vowels and consonants and combines them into syllables and words. Later he learns to name and identify the letters and arrange them in the alphabet.

The phonic method was undoubtedly of German origin. It is usually credited to Ickelsamer who discussed it in a grammar¹ published in 1527. His method provided for the use of pictures which suggested the sounds to be emphasized. There was much drill in blending basic sounds to form syllables and words. Ickelsamer's theory was peculiarly applicable to the German language. It was at once adopted by several of his associates, and several interesting books were published for the use of beginners. The method was further developed in 1542 by Ortholph Fuchszperger in a little volume entitled Leeszkunst in which he had a pictured ABC with the powers and forms of the letters explained;² and in 1650 by Johannes Buno of Danzig who prepared a phonic primer³ guaranteed to teach a child to read in six days. All of these books made use of illustrations. Buno used a scheme later emphasized by Basedow, rewarding the child who learned to speak the syllables

¹Valentinus Ickelsamer, "Ein Teutsche Grammatica" (1527). Reprinted in H. Fechner, Vier seltene Schriften des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts. Berlin: Wiegandt und Grechen, 1882.

²Karl Kehr, Geschichte der Methodik, I, 65. Gotha: E. F. Thienemann, 1888.

³Johannes Buno, Nenes und also eingerichtetes ABC und Lesebuchlein. Dantzig: A. Hunefeld, 1650.

correctly by giving him an almond, fig, apple, pencil, or a pretty little picture.

In the meantime, English scholars began consideration of the phonic method. It was anticipated in Bullokar's orthographie (1580)¹ and in Coote's English Schoole-Master (1596).² A seventeenth century treatise³ by Richard Lloyd based the teaching of reading upon the powers of the letters.

About 1650, in the Little Schools of Port Royal at Paris, the method was applied by Blaise Pascal and his sister, Jacqueline.⁴ Comenius, at about the same time, advocated a "lively and vocal alphabet" and included one in his Orbis Pictus (1657). Discussing it in his preface, Comenius said:

It will afford a device for learning to read more easily than heretofore, especially having a symbolical alphabet set before it, to wit, the characters of the several letters, with the image of that creature whose voice that letter goeth about to imitate, pictured by it. For the young ABC scholar will easily remember the force of every character by the very looking at that creature, till the imagination being strengthened by use, can readily afford all things.⁵

Pestalozzi, one of the most famous of German educators, relied much upon spelling as a preliminary to reading, and placed great emphasis upon rhythmic drills to insure accurate learning of the basic sounds. He went so far as to prepare a Book for Mothers, describing exercises to be repeated in the presence of

¹William Bullokar, A Booke at Large for the Amendment of Orthographie for English Speech. London: H. Denham, 1580.

²Coote, op.cit.

³Richard Lloyd, The Schoolemasters' Auxiliaries. London: Printed for the Author, 1654.

⁴M. Lancelot, Grammaire generale de raisonne. Paris, 1660. Excerpt reprinted in Cadet, Port Royal Education, pp. 110-1. Trans. A. D. Jones. London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., 1898.

⁵J. A. Comenius, Preface to Orbis Pictus. English Edition of 1659. Reprint, Syracuse: C. W. Bardeen, 1891.

the child in the cradle, so that a knowledge of correct sounds might be indelibly impressed upon the young mind.¹ Olivier, in 1802, announced an elaborate phonic method,² and Froebel, two decades later, developed a combination reading-writing system in which the analysis of words into their component sounds was an important feature.³

While there was thus a considerable heritage of European theory and practice regarding the phonic method, its influence upon American procedure was almost negligible prior to 1825. But between 1820 and 1850 many American travelers who visited Europe, and particularly Germany, became interested in the phonic (lautir) method, and encouraged its adoption in this country.

The Phonetic Method

The general acceptance of the idea that instruction in the use of the mother tongue should precede the study of the classics focused attention upon the peculiarities of the English language. Many scholars thought that the phonic and alphabetic methods of teaching reading could be combined through the use of a phonetic alphabet in which each sound was represented by a distinct and invariable character.

As early as 1568 Thomas Smith, a member of Queen Elizabeth's court, devised a system of thirty-four letters, each representing a basic sound.⁴ A step forward was taken in 1580

¹Connecticut Common School Journal, IV (January, 1842), 36.

²L. H. Olivier, Über den Charakter und Wert guter Natürlicher Unterrichtes methoden. Leipzig, 1802.

³Friedrich Froebel, Pedagogics of the Kindergarten, pp. 286-337. Trans. Jarvis. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1895.

⁴Sir Thomas Smith, De recta et emendata lingvæ Anglicæ scriptione. Paris: Roberti Stephani Typographi Regij, 1568. 44 folios. Quoted by A. J. Ellis in Early English Pronunciation, I, 34. London: Asher & Co., 1869.

by William Bullokar, who designed an alphabet of forty letters.¹ The seventeenth century brought new schemes by Gill (1619),² Butler (1633),³ and Wilkins (1668),⁴ each of whom proposed to extend the traditional alphabet by the creation of new letters.

The outstanding proposals of the eighteenth century had to do with the use of diacritical marks applied to the existing alphabet. Aristophanes of Byzantium had designed several of these about 195 B.C.,⁵ and various English scholars now sought to re-establish or extend their use. Dyche, in 1709, utilized the double accent mark to indicate phonic syllabification.⁶ Other schemes for indicating the pronunciation of words were introduced by Bailey (1727),⁷ Dilworth (1740),⁸ Buchanan (1757),⁹ Kendrick

¹William Bullokar, A Booke at Large for the Amendment of Orthographie for English Speech. London: Henrie Denham, 1580.

²Alexander Gill, Logonomia Anglica. London: J. Beale, 1619.

³Charles Butler, The English Grammar. Oxford: Wm. Turner, 1633.

⁴John Wilkins, An Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language, pp. 370-3. London: S. Gellibrand and John Martin, Printers to the Royal Society, 1668.

⁵J. E. Sandys, A History of Classical Scholarship, I, 125-6. Cambridge: University Press, 1903.
Sir Edward Thompson, Greek and Latin Paleography, p. 72. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1893.

⁶Thomas Dyche, A Guide to the English Tongue, Preface A-3. London, 1709. The 37th edition was reprinted in New York for James Parker, 1750, and was widely used in America.

⁷Nathan Bailey, The Universal Etymological English Dictionary. London: T. Cox, second edition, 1727.

⁸Thomas Dilworth, A New Guide to the English Tongue. London: H. Kent, 1740.

⁹James Buchanan, A New English Dictionary. London: G. Kent et al, 1757.

(1773),¹ Perry (1775),² Sheridan (1778),³ and Walker (1791).⁴

At the end of the eighteenth century, the popular method was by means of small numerals placed above letters, to show correspondence with sounds in a list of key words.

R. L. Edgeworth, in 1776, developed a phonetic method of teaching reading in which the child first learned from a book printed in phonetic characters, and afterward read the same lesson from a book printed in roman type.⁵ This method drew favorable comment from American educators, particularly from John Parkhurst, who gave it favorable publicity in his pioneer educational journal.⁶

By 1800, the word lists, but not the reading lessons of the spelling books, generally made use of some sort of diacritical marking to show pronunciation. Such marks, however, were not to be found in the primers and ABC books of the eighteenth century.

The Word Method

The word method is usually credited to Comenius, whose Orbis Pictus (1660) made use of pictures to associate correct meanings with words.⁷ Gedike, in 1791, prepared a German primer

¹Wm. Kendrick, A New Dictionary of the English Language. London: J. and F. Rivington, 1773.

²Wm. Perry, The Royal Standard English Dictionary. Edinburgh, 1775. London: J. Stockdale, 1795.

³Thomas Sheridan, A General Dictionary of the English Language. London: J. Dodsley, 3rd Edition, 1780.

⁴John Walker, A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary. New York: Collins and Hannay, 1822.

⁵R. L. and Maria Edgeworth, Practical Education, p. 41. New York: Harpers, 1835.

⁶Teachers' Guide and Parents' Assistant, I (September, 1827), 291-2.

⁷J. A. Comenius, The Great Didactic, chap. xxviii. London: A. & C. Black, 1896.

based on the word method, and devised a reading board as a means of preliminary word drill.¹

Wood, at Edinburgh in 1813, began with the names and forms of the letters, then proceeded at once to the study of whole words. His First Book and his description of the method used in the Sessional School at Edinburgh,² were very influential in America, and did much to bring about the adoption of the word method in progressive schools.

Jacotot, in 1818 in France, developed a variation of the word method which depended upon frequent repetition of the words in a sentence to insure familiarity with them. New words were recognized by a process of reference and comparison with those already taught.³ Jacotot's method had in it elements of both synthetic and analytic procedures. Questioning by the teacher was depended upon to check the pupil's comprehension. A pupil was never assisted except when words were introduced to his notice for the first time. He, not the teacher, was expected to discover relations of difference and similarity.

The Sentence Method

The sentence method is essentially an American contribution to reading technique. It is based on the theory that the sentence, not the word, letter, or sound, is the basic unit of expression, and that reading for thought getting should start with it. The sentence has a distinct total sound, and meaning

¹Friedrich Gedike, Kinderbuch zur ersten Übung im Lesen ohne ABC und Buchstabieren. Berlin, 1791. For description see Kehr, op.cit., p. 100.

²John Wood, Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School, p. 204. Boston: Monroe and Francis, 1830.

³American Annals of Education, I (December, 1830), 161-2.

which can be grasped only when it is comprehended. Hence the point of departure in this method is understanding of the thought expressed. Reading grows out of the association of the written or printed sentence with its meaning.

There is very little in European methodology that suggests this approach. Lubinus anticipated it (1614) in his suggestion that simple sentences be printed below pictures.¹ Comenius followed this idea in his Orbis Pictus (1657) where he made use of words in columns and sentences underneath the pictures.² It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that this plan was given serious consideration as an approach to reading.

Olivier, in the early nineteenth century, began instruction in reading by having the teacher pronounce a sentence, the sense of which was familiar to the pupils, and having them repeat it carefully until they knew all the words in it by sight. He then proceeded by the method of phonic analysis, to a study of the elements making up the sentence.³

Like many other European theories, the sentence method remained practically unnoticed in America until Farnham revived it about 1870.

The Story Method

Suggestions of the story method were included in the procedure reported from Florence in Tuscany in the early nineteenth century. The first thing put into the child's hands was a

¹E. Lubinus, The True and Ready Way to Learn the Latin Tongue, p. 26. Quoted in Quick, op.cit., p. 167.

²J. A. Comenius, The Orbis Pictus. Syracuse: C. W. Bardeen, 1891.

³Olivier, op.cit.

large card containing a simple story in print. The teacher began by explaining the story of a portion of it. He then pronounced the first word, each pupil naming it after him, then the second, third, and so on as in the Jacotot method. It was claimed for this method that it abridged by half the time required for learning to read.¹

The application of the various methods discussed in the foregoing pages is, of course, found in many of the books prepared for the use of children. A discussion of certain outstanding European books used before 1800 in teaching beginning reading, will be presented in the chapter which follows.

¹American Annals of Education, I (December, 1830), 160.

CHAPTER V
SOME IMPORTANT EUROPEAN BOOKS USED IN TEACHING BEGINNING READING
BEFORE 1800

Books used for teaching children to read, which were in common use prior to 1800, fall into certain classes: (1) primers; (2) hornbooks and battledores; (3) ABC books; (4) spelling books; and (5) juvenile story books. It is the purpose of this chapter to trace the evolution of these books for children, and to show the permanent contribution which they made to American methods of teaching beginning reading.

It was not until after the Reformation that a child's first book was commonly called a primer. The name was applied rather to the layman's prayer book, that is, the Book of Hours and Prayers, as distinguished from the Missals.¹ Its traditional subject matter was the alphabet, a collection of prayers and graces, and a few selections dealing with the elements of Christian doctrine. As children came more and more to learn to read from the primer, it gradually developed into a simple children's book and lost much of its religious character.

For years there was no attempt to grade the contents of primers to the ability of the pupils to read. The subject matter was learned by rote, and committed to memory. Being in Latin, it had little meaning for the child.²

One of the first undertakings of the Lutherans was the preparation of new primers designed particularly for children.

¹E. M. Field, The Child and His Book, p. 118. London: Gardner, Darton & Co., 1895.

²Goeffrey Chaucer, "The Prioresses Tale" in The Student's Chaucer, p. 499. London: Henry Frowde, 1897.

Melanchthon, in 1524, prepared one in Latin which contained considerable secular material based upon Greek literature.¹ Luther prepared one in German (1525) including in it a catechism for children.²

In 1534 Henry VIII established the practice of licensing primers in England to control their content, and later ordered all save one version destroyed. This official primer set the style for many years in England.

Early ABC Books

The earliest known ABC book with illustrations was one by Christopher Hueber, a Bavarian schoolmaster, in 1477.³ In it were little pictures with letters written above them, the association being supposed to make the beginning of reading easy. In 1532 Marcum Schulte prepared a pictured ABC in which the initial letters, in order, were followed by lines so arranged that they formed rhyming couplets.⁴ About this time, there were published also several little books exemplifying Ickelsamer's phonic method, first expounded in 1527. Most important was Jordan's Leyenschul,⁵ which made use of illustrations to suggest the powers as well as the names of the letter. There was also one by Ickelsamer himself, containing several pages dealing with

¹Phillip Melanchthon, Enchiridion Elementorem Puerilium. Wittenberge, 1524.

²E. E. Reisner, Evolution of the Common School, p. 28. New York: Macmillan Co., 1930.

³Karl Kehr, Geschichte des Lesunterrichts, I, 19. Gotha: E. F. Thienemann, 1889.

⁴Ibid., pp. 28-9.

⁵Peter Jordan, Leyenschul. Mentz, 1533. Reprinted in Fechner, Vier seltene Schriften. Berlin: Wiegandt und Gruber, 1882.

the phonic method.¹

The early English ABC books were merely simplified forms of the first part of the primer. There is reason to believe that at least eight appeared between 1538 and 1650.² By 1650, the inclusion of some of the simpler material from the Book of Hours in the ABC book had caused most people to think of this child's book as the primer, and gradually the title "primer" was transferred to the new sort of book for beginners.

Horn Books and Battledores

Horn books and battledores were abbreviated ABC's, usually containing a single sheet exhibiting the alphabet, syllabarium, and a few brief reading exercises. Their popularity was due chiefly to their cheapness. Tuer fixes the date of the first horn book at about 1450.³ It took its name from the thin piece of transparent horn tacked over a printed sheet upon a board.

From its shape the horn book was often called a battledore. References to it appear as early as 1693.⁴ Toward the close of the seventeenth century a cardboard substitute for the early horn book came into use. Credit for its great popularity is usually given to Benjamin Collins, a printer who devised a three-leaved card which folded into oblong shape, suitable for putting into the pocket. Many such battledores were sold in the American colonies.⁵

¹Valentin Ickelsamer, Die rechte Weis auff's Kurtzist Lesen Zu lernen. Marburg, 1534. Reprinted in Fechner, op.cit.

²Field, op.cit., p. 125.

³A. W. Tuer, History of the Horn Book, p. 15. London: Leadenhall Press, 1897.

⁴Oxford Dictionary, Vol. I, Part II, p. 708.

⁵Charles Welsh, A Bookseller of the Last Century, p. 91. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1885.

Early Spelling Books

The first spelling book to receive wide recognition was Coote's The English Schoolmaster (1596),¹ a notable volume which made several contributions to the development of textbooks. In it the alphabet was presented in three styles of type. Then followed the vowels and consonants, with the peculiarities of various letters indicated, and several pages of syllables, beginning with those of two letters, and proceeding to more difficult ones. Coote introduced a bit of simplified spelling, provided much practice in dividing words into syllables, and inserted several reading exercises, the words of which had already been given in the spelling tables. Coote's theory of reading was that if a pupil could combine letters to form syllables, and on the other hand divide hard words into syllables, he could read any subject matter.

No other speller prior to 1700 was as widely used as Coote's. Other important publications of this period included productions by George Fox,² Thomas Lye,³ Nathaniel Strong,⁴ and John Bunyan.⁵ As new spellers appeared, there was a tendency to include more and more words in the spelling lists. Lye's volume was advertised to contain every word in the Bible, set

¹Edmund (Edward) Coote, The English Schoolemaster (1596). 24th ed. London: Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1635.

²George Fox, Instructions for Right Spelling and Plain Directions for Reading and Writing True English. London, 1665.

³Thomas Lye, A New Spelling Book. 2nd ed. London, 1677.

⁴Nathaniel Strong, The Schoolmaster in London, Or England's Perfect Schoolmaster. 10th ed. London: B. Billingsley, 1706.

⁵John Bunyan, A Book for Boys and Girls, or Country Rhimes for Children. Printed for H. P. and sold by the Booksellers in London, 1686.

down in alphabetical order. Toward the end of the century the trend changed toward the elimination of many words, and the arrangements of syllables in tables. All of the spellers were decidedly religious in tone, although less extreme than the primers.

Some Seventeenth Century Primers

Noteworthy among the primers were three which appeared about 1660. The Orbis Pictus of Comenius (1657)¹ first introduced realistic subject matter and abandoned the alphabetic-spelling approach to reading in favor of a combined word-sentence-phonetic method which made much of pictures. Hoole's primer (1659)² followed the style of the early German ABC books, and the method proposed in 1612 by John Brinsley.³ A third primer by Adis,⁴ prepared "by divine assistance", was probably more typical of the middle seventeenth century than were the two just mentioned. The alphabet was neither illustrated nor rhymed, but appeared on a single small page, followed by the syllabarium. Forty-one pages of words to be spelled, preceded the first reading lesson. The uninteresting, highly religious character of the subject matter was in keeping with the Puritan ideals of that day. A Fannatick's Primer was one of the earliest to refer to the proper observance of "stops" in reading.

¹J. A. Comenius, The Orbis Pictus. Trans. Charles Hoole. London, 1659.

²Charles Hoole, A Plain and Easy Primer for Children. London, 1659.

³Brinsley, op.cit.

⁴Henry Adis, A Fannatick's Primer, for the Instruction of Their Little Ones, in Order to Attain the Perfect Reading. London: Frances Smith, 1661.

Let them (the children) know distinctly their times of Breathing at each Point.

As to stop at a Comma (,) or quarter breath, while one may count two;

At the semi-colon (;) while one can tell three;

At the colon (:) half a breath, or whilst one may tell five;

At the period (.) a whole breath, or whilst one may tell ten;

At the Interrogation (?) whilst one may tell ten;

And at the Admiration (!) the same distance of Time, whilst one may tell ten.¹

Later in the seventeenth century there appeared a very influential volume, known as The Protestant Tutor. It was published by Benjamin Harris in 1679, and in addition to the current primer material dealing with the alphabet, syllabarium, and easy syllables, contained a great deal of extremely Puritanical content for reading. When Harris was forced to flee to America, he set up a new printing establishment in Boston, and in 1687 published an American version, known as The New England Primer. This little book proved to be one of the most influential primers ever published.

Eighteenth Century Developments

The eighteenth century brought many interesting books for children. Among the primers, The Royal Primer,² authorized by King George II and printed by John Newbery, was outstanding. In appearance it was in striking contrast to those just described. Its size had been reduced, several illustrations added, and the Old English type discarded. The reading lessons showed a decided break away from the traditional religious content. Among adherents

¹ Adis, op.cit.

² The Royal Primer, or an Easy and Pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading. Authorized by His Majesty George II, to be used throughout His Majesty's dominions. Adorned with cuts. Printed for John Newbery at the Bible and Sun. London, 1762.

of the Church of England, The Royal Primer came to be as thoroughly accepted as was The Protestant Tutor among the Dissenters. The American primers of the early nineteenth century showed the combined influence of these two ancestral books.

The eighteenth century brought many improvements in the spelling book. The first author to make a distinct contribution to methods of instruction was Thomas Dyche, whose speller (1708)¹ introduced the double accent mark to clarify syllabification. Dyche devoted much space to monosyllables, arranging hundreds of them in tables alphabetically, according to basic sounds.

The London Spelling Book (1710)² was one of the first to contain an illustrated alphabet after the manner of the ABC books. Dilworth's popular speller,³ published in 1740, introduced for the first time a few selected fables whose morals were very obvious. It was an ABC, primer, speller and reader under one cover. Dilworth presented his words in a series of tables arranged in increasing order of difficulty. Every word was placed in a spelling table before being used in a reading exercise. Many of the difficult and obsolete words contained in earlier books were eliminated. The reading lessons were short and comparatively easy, and furnished the pattern for many later school books, including Noah Webster's spelling books.

Other influential spelling books were The Child's New Plaything (1743),⁴ "intended to make learning to read a diversion

¹Thomas Dyche, A Guide to the English Tongue. London, 1708. Reprinted, New York: James Parker, 1750.

²The London Spelling Book. London, 1710. Rev. ed.: G. Robinson, 1781.

³Thomas Dilworth, A New Guide to the English Tongue. London, 1740. 20th ed. London: H. Kent, 1758.

⁴The Child's New Plaything. London, 1743. First American Edition, Philadelphia: W. Dunlap, 1763.

instead of a task," according to the suggestions of John Locke; and Fenning's Universal Spelling Book (1755),¹ also based upon Locke's philosophy that "children can be cheated into learning." Fenning's book was outstanding in its use of fables, and in its reading lessons based upon words which the child already understood. A third great speller was Perry's The Only Sure Guide to the English Tongue (1776)² arranged upon the same scheme of diacritical marking as was his The Royal Standard Dictionary.³ Perry believed in teaching first the names and sounds of the letters in their various combinations. His speller began with tables of syllables and easy words grouped to stress similar sounds. Children were first to spell great numbers of words "on the book," and later "off the book" by heart. After this, if any child encountered a word he could not pronounce, he was to consult the "key to the sounds" and discover for himself how to say the word.

Several other pronouncing spellers appeared in the late eighteenth century, based upon various systems of diacritical marks.

Books for the Amusement of Children

The eighteenth century brought great developments in this field. The limits of the present digest prevent an adequate account of even the outstanding publications of the period, several of which are discussed in the unabridged dissertation.

¹Daniel Fenning, The Universal Spelling Book. London: H. Kent, 1755.

²Wm. Perry, The Only Sure Guide to the English Tongue. Edinburgh, 1776.

³Wm. Perry, The Royal Standard English Dictionary. Edinburgh, 1775.

Typical of the early ones were The Little Book for Little Children,¹ which first contained the famous pictured alphabet, "A was an Archer"; and The Child's Week's Work,² which first introduced conundrums and riddles in children's books.

The great period of juvenile literature began with the activities of John Newbery, who set up a printing establishment in London in 1744. According to Darton,³ this date marks the beginning of a new epoch in children's reading. Thanks to Newbery, many little volumes, mostly of vest pocket size, were published with the avowed purpose of amusing and at the same time instructing children in valuable information. In these juvenile books,⁴ pictured alphabets, rhyming alphabets, fables, conundrums,

¹Thomas White, A Little Book for Little Children. London: Twelfth Edition, 1702.

²William Ronkley, The Child's Week's Work. London: G. Conyers and J. Richardson, 1712.

³F. J. Harvey Darton, Children's Books in English, p. 2. Cambridge: University Press, 1932.

⁴Outstanding publications by Newbery include:

Aesop's Fables, 1770

The British Battledore

Bay's History of Sandford and Merton

Fifty-Six Squares, 1774

First Book for Children, 1789

The Renowned History of Giles Gingerbread, 1769

The History of Goody Two-Shoes, 1766

The Ladder of Learning, 1789

The Lilliputian Magazine, 1752. Oliver Goldsmith, editor.

The Little Lottery Book for Children, 1760

The Little Pretty Pocket Book, 1744.

The Little Wanderers, 1789

Mother Goose's Melodies, 1780

The Picture Exhibition, 1783

A Pretty Book for Children, 1751

A Pretty Book of Pictures, 1751

A Pretty Plaything for Children, 1762

The Royal Primer, 1762

Tom Thumb's Folio, 1768

Tommy Trapwit, 1758

moral tales, fairy stories, and a variety of other reading materials found a place. Associated with Newbery were several other printers and authors, most noted of whom was Oliver Goldsmith, believed to have been the author of several of the stories published.

The effect of Newbery's publications upon America was soon manifest. Newbery widely advertised his little books in this country and offered attractive rates to booksellers. Several of them were published by H. Gaine of New York, who was especially active during the Revolutionary War Period. Many more were reprinted by Isaiah Thomas at Worcester, Massachusetts, who followed Newbery's general style of production. Between 1764 and 1788, he reproduced over fifty of Newbery's "best sellers," many of them requiring three and four editions to satisfy the American demand. And when American publishers began to produce "first books" for children in the early nineteenth century, the influence of Newbery's illustrated alphabets, nursery rhymes, morals and maxims, and even his humorous stories, riddles and conundrums, was very evident.

By the close of the eighteenth century, nearly every type of subject matter now found in children's books had been advanced. Nevertheless, for most children the traditional primer and spelling book furnished the introduction to reading, and the process of learning was far from appealing to the little ones themselves.

CHAPTER VI
SOME EUROPEAN REFORMS OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES
WHICH AFFECTED THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING READING

Many early educators tried to inject into instruction a note of kindness and consideration for the little learner, and to make the best possible use of the time devoted to his lessons. However, there was little systematic study of either the child's needs or his capacities and interests, that could be called scientific, until the seventeenth century.

Bacon was one of the first to insist that education should proceed according to the powers and limitations of the pupils. He argued also that knowledge should not be an end in itself, but that the process of acquiring it should be emphasized. The early realists helped establish the idea that education should appeal through sense perception to the understanding of the child; furthermore, that it should follow the order of nature, proceeding from the simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown, etc. Three hundred years later, American practices in teaching beginners were almost completely dominated by these doctrines.

It was John Locke who laid the basis for modern scientific psychology in determining the exact procedure to follow. According to Cubberley,¹ Locke may be called the founder of empirical psychology, and the forerunner of modern experimental psychology and child study. Locke believed that the mind is a blank at birth, that knowledge comes primarily through the senses and is built up according to the inductive process.

¹
E. P. Cubberley, The History of Education, p. 433.
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920.

In learning anything, as little as possible should be proposed to the mind at once; and that being understood and fully mastered, to proceed to the next adjoining part yet unknown.¹

As for the method of presentation, he says

Things that in a remote and confused view seem very obscure, must be approached by gentle and regular steps, and what is most visible, easy and obvious in them, first considered. Reduce them to their distinct parts, and then in their due order bring all that should be known concerning everyone of these parts into plain and simple questions; and then what was thought obscure, perplexed, and too hard for our weak parts, will lay itself open to the understanding in fair view, and let the mind into that which before it was awed with and kept at a distance from as wholly mysterious.²

Rousseau, like Locke, argued that authority should be replaced by reason and investigation as the basis of method. He laid great stress upon the doctrine that education is a natural process, starting from natural instincts, and demanding the unhampered development of native powers and capacities. He believed that each period of the child's life has certain activities which are normal for that period; that educational psychology should seek for and stress these; and that the child's natural instincts and activities should be utilized in his education.

Rousseau advocated careful study of the child to be educated. Like Comenius, he insisted that school systems should be made for children, and not children for school systems.³ And like many others since, he saw in education a process of preparing the individual to live in a group, where each should work for his own advancement, and at the same time be sympathetic and helpful

¹ John Locke, Concerning Human Understanding (1689), p. 59 ff.
London: Routledge & Sons, 1909.

² Ibid.

³ W. S. Monroe, Comenius and the Beginnings of Educational Reform, p. 146. New York: Scribners, 1907.

to his fellows.¹ Through this proposal, he did much to establish the idea of socialization and cooperative effort in education.

Rousseau's influence upon the teaching of reading was noticeable first in the trend toward the selection of naturalistic subject matter for children's books. Later it played a great part in the movement to substitute pupil activities for complete teacher domination in the classroom.

Basedow set out to apply "education according to nature" in his school at Koethen,² and drew around him a group of educators known as the Philanthropinists, committed to the principle that the process of learning should appeal to the child.

Pestalozzi, like Rousseau, rejected the teaching of facts and words and substituted a well organized plan based upon the natural and orderly development of the growing child. Pestalozzi was very anxious to "psychologize" education. The essence of his plan was the continuous development of the mind through appropriate exercise so selected that there would result a harmonious and progressive functioning of the mind in all its capacities for action or expression. This development was to be based upon the study of objects rather than words. In accordance with Pestalozzian doctrines, "object lessons" came to be a powerful factor in molding classroom practices of the nineteenth century. Because of Pestalozzi, American schools attained a better organization, materials of instruction were more carefully graded, and there resulted a definite attempt to provide for individual differences in children as revealed by systematic child study. No European

¹J. J. Rousseau, Emile, pp. 226-8. Trans. W. H. Payne. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1892.

²F. C. Schlosser, History of the Eighteenth Century, II, 199. London: Chapman and Hall, 1844.

educator had a greater influence upon America than did Pestalozzi.

Among the contemporaries of Pestalozzi who contributed much to child study technique, was R. L. Edgeworth, the Irish landlord. Edgeworth was the father of eighteen children, all of whom he taught to read. He made detailed observations of his children and kept careful notes of their reactions, in order to improve his methods with later children. His daughter, Maria, claimed for him the distinction of having been "the first to recommend both by precept and example, what Bacon would call the experimental method in education."¹ Edgeworth showed the unmistakable influence of Rousseau. His most specific contribution to methodology was his phonetic method, based upon a new system of diacritical marks.²

In spite of the claim made for Locke and Edgeworth, Herbart is often regarded as the founder of the experimental method in education. At Konigsberg, where he was for many years a professor, he set up a seminary in education, and an experimental school in which to test his theories of instruction. His influence upon primary methods was far-reaching, although of shorter duration than that of Pestalozzi.³

Herbart's doctrines affected the teaching of reading at several points. They led to an emphasis upon carefully planning each lesson and following a psychological order in presenting it; upon the association of new ideas with old, and adequate application of the child's own experience. In the field of content, the

¹R. L. and Maria Edgeworth, Memoirs of R. L. Edgeworth, p. 165. London: Baldwin, Cradock & Co., 1821.

²See p. 26.

³J. F. Herbart, Outlines of Educational Doctrine, I, chaps. 11, 111, 1v. Trans. A. F. Lange. New York: Macmillan Co., 1901.

culture-epoch theory led to the use of nursery rhymes, fairy tales and folk stories, simple and full of fancy. The preparation of children to understand these tales caused teachers to emphasize the telling and dramatization of stories, and paved the way for the story method of teaching beginning reading.

From Friedrich Froebel, even more than from Pestalozzi and Herbart, have come the educational doctrines which dominate progressive practices of the present day. To him we owe the theory that development is produced by exercise of function, that exercise which aims at mental development must be self-activity, and that the more it is self-produced, self-maintained, and self-directed, the better the results. Spontaneity of action, the adaptation of all activities to the child's ability, and the benevolent cooperation of the teacher, were Froebelian principles which found their place in the activity and project methods of recent years.¹

But even in the nineteenth century there were traces of Froebelian influence in the hand work and silent reading exercises called for in progressive primers, and in various devices for interpreting what was read. Constructive work to Froebel had a deeper meaning than the mere development of skill or the acquisition of a mechanical process. Its value lay in its use as an expression of ideas, an interpretation of childish understanding. This phase of activity in connection with reading is evident in the type of seat work expected of beginners today.

It was not until about 1825 that the doctrines of any of the educators just discussed became an important factor in American schools. Rousseau's influence was evident first; Pesta-

¹Friedrich Froebel, Pedagogics of the Kindergarten, I, 312. Trans. J. Jarvis. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1895.

lozzian theories were dominant from 1840-1880; Herbartian influence was powerful from 1875-1910; and Froebelian practices were not widely accepted above the Kindergarten level until the late nineteenth century. Yet each and all of these famous men had a powerful effect upon practices in teaching beginners to read.

Typical European Schools Which Influenced American Practices in Reading

Among the different types of schools introduced into America from Europe, four were especially influential in molding practices in teaching beginners to read. They were (1) the dame school, (2) the monitorial school, (3) the infant school, and (4) the German volksschule.

The dame school, an outgrowth of the English Reformation, was a private adventure school, conspicuous for its lack of equipment and its low educational standards. Its chief purpose was to provide enough instruction in reading to enable boys to enter the grammar schools, and to give girls an introduction to reading. Reading was taught by individual instruction, and pupils' attainments in it were decidedly limited. The dame school as established in America, was an important factor in limiting primary education and continuing antiquated methods in teaching beginners to read. The procedure and standards of the dame schools were often carried over into the district schools of the early nineteenth century.

Monitorial instruction, which was decidedly popular in America from 1800 to 1830 was chiefly an English procedure, although it was practiced in various European countries. Its essential basis was the use of pupil monitors to teach other

children. By means of it, very large classes were instructed by a single trained teacher. In spite of its shortcomings, the system of monitorial instruction had several definite effects upon teaching reading. Most important were the improvement of teaching material and its careful gradation; the introduction of teaching accessories such as wall charts, letter cards, slates, etc.; the beginnings of definite teacher training in methods; a noticeable decrease in the amount of time allowed for learning the fundamental reading habits; and perhaps most valuable of all, the creation of a popular interest in education for the masses at public expense.

The infant school, copied from England, was in striking contrast to the traditional school for beginners. New types of buildings and surroundings, healthful and delightful learning conditions, interesting teaching material, and a new attitude toward children's interests and abilities, characterized the infant schools of a century ago. The principles of Pestalozzi and Froebel were recognized, and although many activities besides reading were provided, the general effect of the infant school movement upon reading methods was decidedly stimulating and helpful.

The German volksschule affected the teaching of reading through its provision for more adequate school supplies and equipment. It emphasized the importance of teacher training in methods, both in training schools and in service; established the value of professional books and periodicals for this purpose, stimulated the organization and careful gradation of reading materials, and contributed definitely to the graded school plan of the nineteenth century. The word method of teaching reading and the value of training in phonics according to the plan used

in the volksschule, were emphasized by many American educators, and Pestalozzian doctrines regarding the training of children, particularly his ideas of the use of objects in teaching, were widely accepted.

General Conclusion from Part I

The general conclusion to be drawn from Part I of this discussion is that much of the early American procedure in the teaching of beginners was based directly upon our heritage from abroad. The colonists brought with them to America certain fundamental concepts of the purpose of education, and the proper sort of schools to set up. They had a great respect for the books and teaching materials used in Europe, and sought to introduce or imitate them here. Even the methods of instruction were copied as far as possible.

When new theories and materials found acceptance in Europe, it was not long before they appeared on this side of the Atlantic. During the early nineteenth century, American leaders enthusiastically studied practices abroad, in order to discover progressive notions of education that might be adopted here. It was not until the Educational Awakening, which began about 1825, that American contributions to the teaching of reading became significant.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY AMERICAN TEXTBOOKS FOR BEGINNERS

Our colonial ancestors were not entirely dependent upon European publishers for children's books. Every now and then some European printer found his way to America and set up an establishment in which he reproduced as best he could the current publications of Europe. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, American made books by American authors were not unusual, and although they followed in the main the approved European style, Yankee ingenuity expressed itself more and more until by 1830, America had become almost independent of the Old World in the matter of books for beginners.

The New England Primer

In the colonial period, one American book for beginners stood preeminent, - The New England Primer. The story of this famous book has been told by several authors, the accounts by Ford¹ and Johnson² being especially valuable. Attention was called in Chapter V to the famous prototype of The New England Primer, The Protestant Tutor, which Benjamin Harris published on his arrival in America about 1687. The features which made it noteworthy were its rhyming alphabet, its prayers and religious dialogs, the verses written by the martyr, Rogers, to his children, and its shorter catechism.

Although the general content of the primer was always much the same, the eighteenth century brought slight variations in

¹Paul Leicester Ford, The New England Primer. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1897.

²Clifton Johnson, Old Time Schools and Schoolbooks, chap. iii. New York: Macmillan Co., 1904.

response to changing ideas of suitable material for children to read. European influence is evident in the additional rhyming alphabets, and in the use of fables, moral tales, and proverbs. Religious and moral poems, notably those of Dr. Watt, were frequently included. Some of the early editions, following the style of Coote, contained directions to the teacher, for example, "Now let the child be entered in his Letters, and Spelling; let him learn these and such Sentences by heart, whereby he will be both instructed in his Duty, and encouraged in his Learning."¹ In later editions familiarity with the method of instruction was evidently assumed.

Compared with our modern school books, The New England Primer was crude and uninteresting, yet no other primer ever enjoyed such popularity. Its total sales have been estimated at over three million copies. It has been said that it taught millions to read but not one to sin.²

Webster's Spelling Books

Noah Webster's American Spelling Book,³ a strictly American textbook, began to supplant The New England Primer after 1790. Before long it had replaced also such popular English spelling books as Dilworth's, Fenning's, and Perry's, and during most of the nineteenth century, in its revised form,⁴ it easily led all

¹The New England Primer, p. 16. Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1727.

²E. P. Subberley, Public Education in the United States, p. 32. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1919.

³Noah Webster, The American Spelling Book, Second Edition. Boston: Printed by Isaiah Thomas and Ebenezer Andrews, 1790.

⁴Noah Webster, The Elementary Spelling Book, Being an Improvement on The American Spelling Book. New York: J. P. Haven and R. Lockwood, 1829.

textbooks in popularity and sales. Webster's contribution to the teaching of reading was chiefly in the standardization of spelling, the development of a system of indicating pronunciation, the substitution of moralistic content for the strictly religious lessons of the eighteenth century, and the continued emphasis upon spelling before reading, according to the traditional alphabetic method.

Early American Competitors of Webster

Among the eighteenth century spellers was Bingham's The Child's Companion,¹ which placed its early word lists in horizontal form to pave the way for reading, and contained both fables and nature stories, in addition to its religious and moralistic content. Another which merits special notice was Alexander's The Young Ladies' and Gentlemen's Spelling Book,² which was based upon a critical examination of all the other spelling books on the market. Alexander introduced the innovation of listing words, divided and spelled, and in adjoining columns showing the same words spelled as they actually sound. He made a special point of lessons designed to develop patriotism and loyalty to the new nation.

Developments of the Early Nineteenth Century

Three types of beginner's books,- primers, ABC's (first books), and spellers, were common in the early nineteenth century. The primers were largely modifications of The New England Primer,

¹Caleb Bingham, The Child's Companion. 17th Edition. Boston: C. Bingham & Co., 1819.

²Caleb Alexander, The Young Ladies' and Gentlemen's Spelling Book - On a new and improved plan, containing a criterion of rightly spelling and pronouncing the English language, interspersed with many new lessons in reading. . . . Worcester, Mass.: I. Thomas, 1799.

and rarely contained any amusing lessons. Typical volumes were The Columbian Primer (1802),¹ The Franklin Primer (1803),² and The American Primer (1803),³ all of which contained but a few easy lessons for beginners. Typical ABC books were The Child's Guide to Reading and Spelling (1800),⁴ which contained several alphabets "embellished with cuts" and attractive reading lessons on the child's level; The Parlour Teacher (1804),⁵ which was years ahead of its time in illustrations; and The Child's First Book (1802),⁶ whose sentences were built around action words, based upon the child's environment.

The early spellers represented various schemes for arranging words and indicating pronunciation. The American Spelling Book (1802)⁷ used numerals to show pronunciation after the manner of Sheridan; The Child's Spelling Book (1802)⁸ followed Webster's system; The New England Speller (1803)⁹ was based upon

¹H. Mann, The Columbian Primer. Dedham, Mass.: Printed for the Author, 1802.

²Samuel Willard, The Franklin Primer. Boston: J. M. Dunham, 4th Edition, 1803.

³The American Primer. Norfolk: A. C. Jordan & Co., 1803.

⁴The Child's Guide to Spelling and Reading. Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1800.

⁵The Parlour Teacher. Philadelphia: Jacob Johnson, 1804.

⁶W. P. and L. Blake, The Child's First Book. Boston: Printed for the Authors, 1802.

⁷Asa Rhoads, The American Spelling Book. Standford, N.Y.: Daniel Lawrence, 1802.

⁸Abner Kneeland, The Child's Spelling Book. Keene, N.H.: John Prentiss, 1802.

⁹John Fiske, The New England Spelling Book. Brookfield, Mass., 1803.

Perry's dictionary; and Plimpton's American Spelling Book (1807)¹ after Walker's plan. Pike's Columbian Orator² was endorsed by an imposing group of laymen because it gave "a death wound to the incorrect practice of directing children to read lessons before they are able to spell and accent common words of three syllables." Between 1810 and 1820, there developed a differentiation between readers and spelling books, and several spellers appeared with few or no reading lessons in them.

From 1820 to 1830, the trend in spelling books was toward cheap books, unattractive in style and illustrations, and much briefer in content. Some had reading lessons interspersed among the spelling columns, others had the reading exercises grouped in a separate section at the close of the book, which might be purchased separately. There was a growing tendency to indicate pronunciation by the ancient diacritical marks rather than by numerals. The outstanding speller of this decade was the revision of Webster's speller, which appeared in 1829 as The Elementary Spelling Book³ (Old Blue-Back).

The trend in primers was toward simplicity and brevity, and the inclusion of illustrations more for amusement than instruction. The typical primer of 1825 contained thirty-five or thirty-six pages, was fourteen or fifteen centimeters wide, and was paper bound. It began with a pictured alphabet, and frequently contained three or four different ones. It displayed the alphabet prominently on two or three pages near the front of the book,

¹Job Plimpton, The American Spelling Book. Dedham, Mass.: H. Mann, 1807.

²James Pike, The Columbian Orator, or First Book for Children. Portland, Me.: Daniel Johnson, 1806.

³See p. 49.

usually in both romanian and italic type, and often in script. Sometimes the syllabarium followed the alphabet. The first illustrated pages contained four or five cuts per page; those at the close of the book often had but one picture covering from a third to half the page. Not all the pages were illustrated. The words of the reading lessons were largely monosyllables, rarely more than four letters in length. It will be evident from this statement that the primer had assumed most of the features of the earlier ABC book, and had retained but few characteristics of the eighteenth century primers.

It was during this decade that the Educational Awakening in America began. A few outstanding children's books of a different sort appeared upon the market to exemplify the newer ideas in education. Typical of these were The Pestalozzian Primer,¹ The Child's Primer,² and others which will be discussed in Chapters IX and X.

¹John M. Keagy, The Pestalozzian Primer. Harrisburg: John S. Wiestling, 1827.

²Jonathan Lamb, The Child's Primer, or First Book for Primary Schools. Burlington, Vt.: C. Goodrich, 1828.

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WHICH AFFECTED THE TEACHING OF PRIMARY READING

Before discussing in detail the various methods of instruction which prevailed during the nineteenth century, it is desirable to consider briefly the general conditions existing in the common schools of a hundred years ago, and to sketch the important features of certain progressive movements which especially influenced the teaching of primary reading. Throughout this chapter, and at various places in succeeding ones, an effort will be made to show how these movements affected the general spirit, content, and techniques of instruction in reading.

General Educational Conditions of the Early Nineteenth Century

The district school system, established in New England in the early eighteenth century, gradually spread to other parts of the United States. The temptation in every town and district was to raise as little money for schools as possible, in order to lighten the burden of taxation. Districts as a rule employed cheap teachers, made inadequate provision for school buildings and equipment, provided only the most perfunctory sort of supervision, and were generally indifferent to the needs of pupils, particularly the beginners at school. One of the best summaries of the defects of primary education of that period is found in an address before the American Institute of Instruction in 1830, given by William Russell, Editor of the American Journal of Education:

They may be briefly summed up in the great neglect of physical accommodation, of comfort and of health; in the small size, defective ventilation, inconvenient arrangement, and gloomy aspect of most schoolrooms; their uncomfortable seats; the long continued and painful sedentary attitude of the

little pupils; the entire absence of appropriate visible objects, addressed to the active feelings and restless imagination of childhood; the want of cheering and invigorating exercises; a mechanical routine of application, producing little effect but on the memory, and leaving the understanding and the imagination nearly inactive; lessons presented in general, in the form of compulsory tasks; modes of discipline retrospective rather than anticipative, repulsive therefore and arbitrary, not founded on reason and affection, and influencing the imagination only through the medium of fear and restraint; no social intercourse between the pupils permitted; and consequently the natural opportunities for influencing feeling and character precluded.¹

The writings of James G. Carter, Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and other contemporaries of Russell, abound in statements describing the deplorable conditions under which children of a century ago began their instruction at school.

The Educational Awakening

Beginning about 1825 a revival of interest in education swept the country. It was especially noticeable in the north-eastern states, where the influence of Clinton, Mann, Barnard, Carter, Alcott, and others led to many new provisions for the physical needs of schools. Public school societies, formed to provide financial support for education, eventually brought about a free public school system, tax supported and open alike to children of the rich and poor. More attractive classrooms were furnished, educational apparatus and teaching equipment were provided more liberally, and there was a general improvement in the school environment in which the child was introduced to the art of reading.

New Provisions for Training Teachers

About a hundred years ago there began a movement to provide better facilities for training teachers. The academies

¹William Russell, "The Infant School System of Education," Proceedings, American Institute of Instruction, I (1830), 98.

of the seventeenth century were rapidly expanded to provide training courses for prospective teachers. More important still, normal schools were established at public expense, dedicated primarily to the training of teachers. The contribution of these institutions to education was highly significant, particularly in the case of common schools.¹ Especially important for the improvement of instruction in reading were the lectures of Rev. S. R. Hall,² Cyrus Pierce,³ David Page,⁴ and others connected with the normal schools.

During the decade 1840-1850, teachers' institutes came into prominence as a means of teacher training. First organized by Barnard in 1839, they proved so popular that within a few years thousands of teachers annually spent from one to two weeks attending an institute,⁵ and many states made it obligatory upon their school officials to conduct such meetings.⁶ Institutes rapidly came to be a major factor in bringing about improved methods in the classroom.

The rise of teacher training institutes was paralleled by the development of educational journalism. In Germany, educational

¹J. P. Gordy, Rise and Growth of the Normal School Idea. U. S. Bureau of Education Bulletin, 1891, No. 8.

²Henry Barnard, "Samuel Read Hall," American Journal of Education, V (September, 1858), 373-88.

³Cyrus Pierce, "Reading," Proceedings of American Institute of Instruction, XIV (1843), 149-53.

⁴H. Barnard, "The State Normal School at Albany, N.Y." American Journal of Education, XIII (June, 1863), 341.

⁵H. Barnard, Eighth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools for Connecticut, p. 173. Hartford: A. E. Burr, State Printer, 1853.

⁶H. Barnard, "Teachers' Institutes in Rhode Island," American Journal of Education, XV (September, 1865), 405.

periodicals were in circulation as early as 1725, in France in 1789, in England in 1799.¹ The movement got under way in America with the publication in 1818 of The Academician by Albert and John W. Pickett. During the decade 1820-1830, there appeared The American Journal of Education, The Teachers' Guide and Parents' Assistant, and The American Annals of Education. Between 1830 and 1850 were published a score of new periodicals, many of them organs of new educational societies which were springing up throughout the country. The effect of this new body of literature was far reaching. Current practices in foreign lands were explained, excerpts from official reports published, book reviews of new publications given, and the views of many educators disseminated. Few, if any, fields of instruction were more freely discussed than that of teaching reading.

The Educational Revival brought also many professional books for teachers. The first of them, Hall's Lectures on School-keeping,² was published in 1829. The next decade brought several others of which Burton's The District School as It Was,³ and Taylor's The District School,⁴ were perhaps the most influential in focusing attention upon the teaching of beginners to read. Other significant books appeared in the "forties," several of them, as for example, The School and the Schoolmaster,⁵ being

¹S. E. Davis, Educational Periodicals of the Eighteenth Century. U. S. Bureau of Education Bulletin, 1919, No. 28, p. 8.

²S. R. Hall, Lectures to Schoolmasters, p. 22. Boston: Carter, Hendee & Co., 1833.

³Warren Burton, The District School as It Was. Boston: Carter, Hendee & Co., 1835.

⁴J. Orville Taylor, The District School. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834.

⁵Alonzo Potter and George B. Emerson, The School and the Schoolmaster. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1842.

widely circulated through district school libraries. These books were typical of a score of others which are still remembered because of their discussions of primary methods. Suffice it to say here, that the evils of existing conditions were vigorously attacked and specific proposals for improvement were made.

A fourth important provision for the training of teachers was centered in the programs of new educational organizations which sprang up rapidly between 1830 and 1860. Three types of associations were of special significance,--(1) the American Lyceum, which was recruited from the general public, and devoted itself to improving educational conditions in local communities; (2) Institutes of Instruction, made up of outstanding educators interested in an intensive study of educational problems; and (3) Teachers' Associations, enlisting the rank and file of the teaching profession. Through the efforts of these different organizations, a general awakening of educational interest resulted, nowhere more noticeable than in the field of primary reading methods.

The improvement in the materials and methods used with beginners was due in no small degree to the efforts of certain American travelers in Europe whose reports were published in the new professional literature of the revival. Outstanding among them were John Griscom, Calvin Stowe, Alexander Bache, Henry Barnard, and Horace Mann, who were typical of many others. The general effect of their accounts of education in Europe was to arouse Americans to a realization that a change was needed in American schools, and to stimulate law-makers to make more adequate provision for educational needs. Of special significance was the widespread interest in Pestalozzian practices which resulted from the reports of these men.

The Early Influence of Pestalozzi upon America

The principal contributions of Pestalozzi to the teaching of beginning reading were discussed in Chapter VI. As early as 1806 Joseph Neaf, one of Pestalozzi's disciples, came to America in an effort to establish Pestalozzian methods here. The infant school movement, which reached America about 1816, was strongly Pestalozzian in character, and the literature distributed by the Home and Colonial Infant School Society was widely read in this country.

By 1850, Pestalozzian influence had led to the establishment of graded schools in most of the larger cities, with a teacher for each classroom, and pupils classified according to age and attainments. Improved teaching equipment became much more common, and Pestalozzi's theories of instruction were widely accepted.

The period of greatest Pestalozzian influence began with the Oswego Movement about 1860. Techniques in teaching reading, like those in other subjects, were strikingly affected by his doctrine that teaching should be based on objects rather than words. The content of beginning readers reflected this ideal. The religious element, the moral content which succeeded it, and even the patriotic lessons which marked the early American books, gave way to realistic materials emphasizing nature study and object lessons. It was not until about 1880 that this influence began to wane.

The Herbartian Movement

Beginning about 1865, a wave of enthusiasm for Herbartian ideas swept Germany, and a scientific society for the study of his theories was formed under the leadership of Ziller at Jena.

Twenty years later, similar enthusiasm became apparent in America due chiefly to the influence of Charles DeGarmo, Charles and Frank McMurry, and other American students in German universities.

Herbart's doctrines of apperception and many-sided interest found numerous adherents. His culture-epoch theory and his idea of periodic development were widely accepted. Character building took on new significance, and the selection and control of experiences in the school became an important objective of education.

It was in connection with the selection of subject matter for textbooks that the Herbartian movement made its most notable contribution to the teaching of beginning reading. Two tendencies became marked, (1) the inclusion of more fables, folk stories, fairy tales, and imaginative literature rather than so much realistic material; and (2) the use of whole stories and selections rather than mere excerpts from them. Accompanying the Herbartian Movement, and no doubt considerably influenced by it, was the rise of the story method of teaching beginning reading.

The Child Study Movement

Under the leadership and general direction of Dr. Granville Stanley Hall, there developed in the late nineteenth century what is often called the child-study movement. Its objective was first hand observation of the mental and physical characteristics of children. Hall was one of the first to introduce experimental psychology in this country and publish the results of his investigations. As President of Clark University, he drew about him an enthusiastic group of child study workers.

Of special significance for beginning reading was his elaborate investigation¹ of what the average child knows on

¹G. S. Hall, "The Content of Children's Minds on Entering School," Princeton Review (May, 1882), 139.

entering school. As the child study movement grew, the studies fell into two groups, (1) careful observation of individuals or small groups of children, and (2) statistical studies based on a general syllabus or questionnaire. Child study organizations were formed in many mid-western states, and ultimately a child study section of the National Education Association. While many of the studies made were inconclusive because of the methods used, the general effect of the movement was to focus attention upon the needs and development of children.

The New Psychology

Another event of great significance for primary education was the publication in 1890 of a new discussion of psychology by William James.¹ This marked the beginning of a movement to apply to psychology the general principles of biological evolution. Education, according to this new theory, represented the process of organizing both tendencies to behavior and acquired habits of conduct. The thought processes were considered in their functional relationships, and a radically different theory of the laws of learning was formulated.

Gradually popular favor shifted from the culture-epoch and periodic development theories of the Herbartians to the periodic development concept and Thorndike's statement of the laws of learning. In the new psychology, pupil activities became highly significant.

The Activity Movement

The emphasis upon behavior as a fundamental element in education led to a new conception of activity in learning. There

¹William James, Principles of Psychology. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1890.

had been for several years an increased provision for motor expression in the schoolroom. The kindergarten influence had slowly permeated the primary grades, but much of the activity in 1890 was still formal and symbolical.

The new activity movement which began in the closing years of the century called for much more than motor activity. It emphasized observation, reasoning, understanding, and other forms of intellectual activity. Furthermore, it identified itself with the social life of the child in such a way that the whole spirit of the school was changed. Charles H. Judd, one of the younger psychologists, believed, like James, that activities have their origin in the need for adaptation to the environment. But Judd frequently pointed out that the important thing for education is the thought, organized in language, which precedes the movements and that education must assist the child to organize his experiences in his own mind before expressing them to others.¹

On the social side, the new movement was influenced remarkably by two other men, Colonel Francis W. Parker and John Dewey. Both were opposed to the formalism of the activities carried on in many schools. Both of them insisted that the school should provide a rich and varied experience upon which to base its activity program. The classroom should become a natural community in which the child might not only find ample opportunity for self-expression, but where he might also become a thoughtful cooperative citizen. Reading and writing as necessary means of expression might be learned incidentally without compulsion.

The social doctrines of Parker and Dewey, reinforced by the psychological principles advanced by James, Judd and Thorn-

¹Charles H. Judd, Genetic Psychology for Teachers, p. 147. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1903.

dike, bore fruit in the twentieth century "activity" method and "experience" reading now current in progressive schools. Writers of textbooks for beginners, building upon the sentence and story methods of the nineties, recognized the advantage of commencing with subject matter full of meaning for the child, and so far as possible an outgrowth of his activities and environment. It was not until the second decade of the twentieth century, however, that the literary content which came into prominence through the Herbartian influence began to give way to the present emphasis upon stories more definitely related to the child's own experiences.

The Scientific Study of the Reading Process

One of the most important of all the new movements of the nineteenth century centered in the efforts of experimental psychologists to secure scientific information regarding fundamental processes involved in reading. This movement had its beginnings in France and Germany, and its first manifestation in America in 1884. The early European studies dealt principally with four problems: (a) the perceptual processes; (b) the behavior of the eyes in reading; (c) the hygienic conditions affecting reading; and (d) factors which control the rate of reading.

The first important investigation of the perceptual processes in reading was made by Valentius in 1844.¹ He concluded that a reader perceives three or four letters simultaneously, each letter being recognized separately. Exner (1868)² and

¹W. A. Schmidt, An Experimental Study of the Psychology of Reading, p. 15. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917.

²S. Exner, "Über die zu einer Geschichtswahrnehmung nötige Zeit," Sitzungsbericht der Academie der Wissenschaft in Wien, LVIII Ab. II (1868), 601-32.

Bart (1871)¹ made further studies in this field, Bart making use of the tachistoscope to secure more accurate results. Cattell began in 1885 to study perception in reading at Wundt's laboratory in Leipzig. He concluded that consciousness can grasp on the average four numbers, three to four letters, two words, or a sentence composed of four words, and that one tends to perceive by word, phrase, and sentence wholes rather than by successive letters.² Cattell's conclusions were later confirmed by Erdmann and Dodge, who found that words are recognized when formed of letters too small to be identified separately, and that the total form of the word rather than characteristic letters which compose it, is the fundamental factor in perception.³

Goldscheider and Müller, on the other hand, decided (1893) that recognition proceeds sometimes by letters, sometimes by syllables, and often by word wholes, all in the same sentence, varying with the difficulty of the subject matter and the individual differences in readers.⁴ Further extension of this theory was made by Zeitler at Leipzig.⁵

Thus in 1900 two theories of the manner of perception were current. Cattell's findings supported the analytic methods of

¹N. Bart, "Ueber die Zeit welche nötig ist damit ein Gesichtseindruck zum Bewusstsein kommt," Archiv für Physiologie (Pflüger), IV (1871), 325-36.

²J. McK. Cattell, "The Time It Takes to See and Name Objects," Mind, XI (January, 1886), 64.

³B. Erdmann and R. Dodge, Psychologische Untersuchungen über des Lesen, chap. v. Halle: Niemeyer, 1898.

⁴A. Goldscheider and E. Müller, "Zur Psychologie und Pathologie des Lesens," Zeitsehr für Klinische Medezin, XXIII (1893), 131-67.

⁵J. Zeitler, "Tachistoscopische Versuche Über das Lesen," Philosophische Studien, XVI (1900), 380-465.

teaching reading, while those of Goldscheider and Müller favored the synthetic approach.

The study of eye-movements in reading was begun as early as 1879 by Javal, who concluded that such movements were not continuous, but consisted rather of a series of alternate movements and pauses.¹ He was the first to note that reading takes place only during the pauses. Landolt in 1891,² Ahrens in the same year,³ Lamare in 1893,⁴ and Erdmann and Dodge in 1898⁵ carried on further investigations in this field. The results of their studies tended to show that unfamiliar reading matter requires more pauses than does familiar content, and that the frequency of pauses varies greatly in individuals according to the difficulty of the subject matter and the purpose of reading.

The American contribution to the study of eye-movements came largely in the twentieth century through the work of Judd, Dodge, Dearborn, Huey, Schmidt, G. T. Gray, Buswell, and others. The photographic method was first reported by Stratton in 1902,⁶ and again by Dodge in 1903,⁷ and the kinetoscopic camera method

¹Emile Javal, "Essai sur la Physiologie de la Lecture," Annales d'oculistique (1879-80), 135-47.

²M. Landolt, "Nouvelles recherches sur la physiologie des mouvements des yeux," Archives d'Ophtamologie, II (1891-92), 385-95.

³August Ahrens, Die Bewegung der Augen beim Schreiben. Rostock, 1891.

⁴M. Lamare, "Des Mouvements des Yeux pendant la lecture," Comptes rendus de la Societe francaise D'Ophtalmologie, 1893, 385-95.

⁵Erdmann and Dodge, op.cit., p. 283.

⁶G. M. Stratton, "Eye Movements and the Aesthetics of Visual Form," Philosophische Studien, XX (1902), 337-8.

⁷R. Dodge, "Visual Perception of Motion," American Journal of Physiology, VIII (1903), 307-29.

by Judd in 1905.¹

Several important studies of the hygienic requirements of books and reading materials were carried on by European psychologists. Javal, for instance, found that the thickness of letters was a very important factor in their recognition.² Cattell discovered that the shape of the letter affected legibility.³ John made many valuable discoveries regarding inter-line and inter-word spaces.⁴ Following this line of investigation, Sanford in America (1888) contributed many valuable suggestions regarding proper styles and sizes of print for readers.⁵ Studies of this sort were taken seriously by many publishers, so that in the closing years of the century a notable improvement in the typography of children's books became apparent.

A fourth problem related to the factors and conditions on which the rate of reading depends. Romanes in 1884, in the earliest experiment carried on in America, found that there was no apparent relationship between slowness of reading and the power of assimilation; on the contrary, the most rapid reader he found, proved to be also the best at assimilating.⁶ Abell in

¹J. H. Judd, J. N. McAllister, and W. M. Steele, "General Introduction to a Series of Studies of Eye Movements by Means of Kinetoscopic Photographs," Psychological Review Monograph Supplements, VII (March, 1905), 1-16.

²Javal, op.cit.

³J. McK. Cattell, "Ueber die Zeit der Erkennung und Benennung von Schriftzeichen, Bildern und Farben," Philosophische Studien, II (1885), 634-50.

⁴Herman John, Die Hygiene des Auges in den Schulen. Leipzig: Urban und Schwarzenberg, 1883. Trans. W. P. Turnbull. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1886.

⁵E. C. Sanford, "The Relative Legibility of the Small Letters of the Alphabet," American Journal of Psychology, I (May, 1888), 424.

⁶George J. Romanes, Mental Evolution in Animals, pp. 36-7. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1884.

1894 concluded that comprehension may be quite independent of the absolute rate of reading, and that audible or imagined pronunciation of the words read tends to decrease the rate of reading.¹

Quantz, in 1897, likewise found that lip-movement is a serious hindrance to speed in reading, and insisted that its prevention should constitute one of the important objectives in teaching beginners to read. Quantz listed the factors which control speed in reading, in the order of importance, thus: (1) visual perception; (2) practice, as determined by the amount of reading; (3) power of concentration; (4) mental alertness; (5) scholarly attainments.²

The contribution of psychologists of the nineteenth century to the scientific study of methods in reading is thus seen to be of extreme importance. Between 1884 and 1900, fourteen American studies had been reported, ten of them appearing in periodicals between 1896 and 1900. The movement for the scientific study of reading gained great impetus as the twentieth century advanced.

¹Adelaide Abell, "Rapid Reading," Educational Review, VIII (October, 1894), 283-6.

²J. O. Quantz, "Problems in the Psychology of Reading," Psychological Review Monograph Supplement, II (1897), 34-5. New York: Macmillan Co., 1897-99.

CHAPTER IX

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYNTHETIC METHODS IN AMERICA

The Educational Revival which began to be manifest about 1825 focused attention for the first time in this country upon the technique of instruction in the common schools. Many ideas were expressed about methods of teaching beginners to read. Some are easily traced back to earlier centuries; others were the natural result of the movements described in Chapter VIII.

The present chapter is devoted to a consideration of four basic synthetic methods, the origins of which have already been sketched, in order to show their further evolution in America. Those to be considered are: (1) the alphabetic, (2) the phonic, (3) the phonetic, and (4) the word building method.

The American Alphabet Method of a Century Ago

In spite of the fact that until about 1825 the alphabet method had been the accepted one in practically every school, it had undergone little refinement at the hands of American teachers. A few improvements in ABC books and primers had been made, notably in the choice of selections included and the development of pictorial alphabets and other illustrations. Spelling books had been simplified considerably by the elimination of many words which the child had been expected to master as a preparation for reading. But a century ago the standard procedure in teaching beginners emphasized (1) the learning of the alphabet, (2) the syllabarium, and (3) syllabic spelling of many words before any reading was undertaken.

Undoubtedly the most common procedure was to have each pupil learn his letters from a book, either a primer, speller, or an ABC. The teacher called the pupils to him, singly, and with a

pen, pencil, or penknife, pointed to the letters from a to z or from z to a, and asked their names. If the pupil's response was incorrect, the teacher told him the name. The entire twenty-six letters were thus recited in succession. Little motivation or explanation was included in the lesson, which was very brief. Usually the process was repeated three or four times a day, for a period of six months, before mastery of the alphabet was attained.

Once the names of the letters were learned, the pupil began syllabic spelling, reciting first the syllabarium just as in the days of Brinsley. Webster's spelling book and McGuffey's reader were doubtless two of the most powerful reasons for continuing this practice. The spelling of the words was supposed in some way to insure their recognition in the reading exercises which followed the spelling lesson. The attack upon the alphabet method gained notable headway after 1840. Among those chiefly responsible for the decline of the method, Warren Burton,¹ Thomas Palmer,² and Horace Mann³ were perhaps most influential. Very rarely after 1850 did any educator venture to champion the traditional technique. Nevertheless, publishing companies continued for years to point out that their books, while obviously designed for other systems of instruction, were equally well adapted to the alphabet method.

The Phonic Method

Interest in the phonic method was stimulated greatly by

¹Warren Burton, The District School as It Was, pp. 47-51. Boston: Carter, Hendee & Co., 1833.

²T. H. Palmer, "On the Evils of the Present System of Primary Instruction," Proceedings, American Institute of Instruction (1837), 211-39.

³Horace Mann, Annual Reports on Education, pp. 310-32. Boston: Horace B. Fuller, 1868.

the reports of American travelers in Germany during the early nineteenth century. In 1827 Parkhurst prepared a detailed statement of Edgeworth's method,¹ with an explanation of the manner of teaching the phonic combinations. The next year there was published what appears to have been the first American primer to apply the phonic principle in anything more than the rhyming word or phonogrammic arrangement.² The author, Lamb, emphasized the calling of each letter by its power, not its name, and depended upon pictures to suggest the key words for the sounds. Not long afterward, a unique primer by Mulkey (1832)³ introduced pictures to show the correct position of the speech organs in forming the basic sounds, and provided exercises in articulation. In 1836 Parsons published a primer⁴ which stressed both the sounds and names of the letters. His plan provided for the analysis of words into their sounds, and the synthesis of these sounds to form words again. In these three books we have the basis for the phonic method. All of them utilized the spelling book plan of arranging rhyming words in columns so that analagous sounds would assist the child in recognizing the form of words and syllables.

Horace Mann, who made a careful study of the schools of Germany and was particularly impressed by the phonic (lautir) method in use there, described and endorsed it in his annual report for 1843.⁵ The general procedure was much like that of

¹See p. 28.

²Jonathan Lamb, The Child's Primer, or First Book for Primary Schools. Burlington, Vt.: C. Goodrich, 1828.

³William Mulkey, A Primary Book for Children. Philadelphia: J. Howe, 1832.

⁴John Usher Parsons, Analytical Primer, Being the First Part of the Analytical Spelling Book. Portland, Me.: W. Hyde, 1836.

⁵Horace Mann, op.cit., p. 318.

Ickelsamer in the sixteenth century. At about the same time, the Privy Council of England authorized the phonic method for use in the English schools,¹ and sanctioned a new primer exemplifying it.² It is not surprising that American publishers, thus reinforced by support from Germany and England, prepared other books on the phonic plan. The decade 1840-1850 saw several new ones, among the most widely used being those of Swan³ and Tower.⁴

Interest in the phonic method was accompanied by increased attention to correct articulation and enunciation. Page,⁵ Town,⁶ and others devised large charts of the elementary sounds, to be placed upon schoolroom walls. William Russell, one-time editor of The American Journal of Education, was an ardent advocate of drill upon sounds, and prepared a primer especially designed to provide a correct foundation for such exercises.⁷

By 1850 it was becoming evident that the phonic method worked best when combined with the word method. This position was supported by Parkhurst, Pierce, Mann, and others of the well known educational leaders, with the result that after 1850 it was

¹"Shuttleworth's Phonics," Quarterly Review (London), LXXIV (June, 1844), 26-38.

²J. P. Kay Shuttleworth, The First Phonic Reading Book. London: J. W. Parker, 1843.

³William D. Swan, The Primary School Reader. Boston: Charles Little and James Brown, 1843.

⁴David B. Tower, The Gradual Primer, or Primary School Enunciator. New York: Cady and Burgess, 1843.

⁵David P. Page, A Normal Chart of the Elementary Sounds of the English Language. Syracuse, New York: Hall and Dickson, 1846.

⁶Salem Town, Town's Chart of Elementary Sounds. Portland, Me.: Sanborn and Carter, 1846.

⁷Wm. Russell, Introduction to Russell's Primary Reader. Boston: Charles Tappan, 1847.

unusual to find beginners' books based upon a pure phonic method.

The Phonetic Method

European proposals for a phonetic alphabet found many supporters in America. One of the earliest enthusiasts was Benjamin Franklin, who in 1768 published a new alphabet, and carried on an extended correspondence by means of it.¹ Other proposals were made by Chambers² and Thornton.³ In 1813, Embree published a spelling book in phonetic type, probably the first one in this country.⁴

The phonetic method received considerable impetus through the publication of a journal⁵ in which advocates of different phonetic alphabets exchanged views. In the meantime, other educational journals devoted much space to the problem of supplementing the existing alphabet by means of diacritical marks.

The application of diacritical marks to American made books for beginners came slowly. This was due in large measure to the great variation in the systems of marking. From 1800 to 1825, Walker's scheme of numerals was still the most generally accepted way of indicating pronunciation. But after Webster applied the old Greek marks in his primer (1831), this system

¹The Complete Works in Philosophy, Politics and Morals of the Late Benjamin Franklin, II, 357. London: Johnson, 1806.

²J. G. Chambers, "The Elements of Orthography" in Universal Asylum and Columbian Magazine, VII (1791), 53-8; 113-7; 175-7; 225-8.

³William Thornton, Cadmus, or a Treatise in the Elements of Written Language. Philadelphia: H. Aitken, 1793.

⁴Thomas Embree, Orthography Corrected. Philadelphia: Dennis Heartt, 1813.

⁵Something New. Published monthly at Boston, beginning March, 1830.

gradually became the most popular, and its use in books for beginners was greatly extended.

In the meantime, a movement developed in England which exerted a powerful influence in America. Isaac Pitman of Bath, with the aid of Alexander Ellis of Bristol, perfected a system of phonotypy, or printing by sound, which made use of an alphabet of forty letters. Applications of it to American primary reading books were made by Comstock,¹ Longley,² and others. The general plan of these men, like that of Edgeworth,³ was to have children learn to read first in phonetic type, then furnish them with the same content in another book printed in roman type. During the decade 1850-1860, keen interest was manifested in this technique. It was swept aside, however, by the rising tide of Pestalozzian doctrines which became so powerful about 1860.

Shortly after the Civil War, the phonetic method again came into prominence through the proposals of Edwin Leigh, who devised a system of "pronouncing orthography."⁴ Leigh's plan was to retain the existing alphabet, but to indicate variations in sound by slight modifications of the letters, preserving as much as possible their customary appearance. Silent letters were shown in hair-line or light face type. His method, in a word, attempted to add to the desirable features of existing methods a new scheme for indicating pronunciation.

¹Andrew Comstock, A Phonetic Reader. Philadelphia: E. H. Butler, 1847.

²Elias Longley, First Phonetic Reader. First American Edition. Cincinnati, O.: Longli and Bruder, 1850.

³See p. 26.

⁴Edwin Leigh, "Elementary Reading," Journal of Proceedings of National Education Association, 1873, pp. 207-19.

Leigh's plan was widely acclaimed, so much so that many publishing houses prepared special editions of their books for beginners, in the pronouncing orthography. Other schemes of the late nineteenth century were those of Bell,¹ Shearer,² and Funk and Wagnalls.³

In spite of the many arguments advanced for a phonetic method, tradition and inertia proved to be insurmountable obstacles, and no phonetic system ever long retained popular favor.

The Word Building Method

In addition to the traditional alphabetic, phonic, and phonetic methods, certain other synthetic systems which appeared before 1870 may be considered under the general classification of the word-building method. The more common procedures were the syllable-word synthesis, the letter-word combination with preliminary emphasis upon the form and sound of the letter, and the word building method in which a new word was formed by adding a new letter to a simpler word already built up in the same manner. In each case, the words formed were immediately used in an appropriate reading exercise.

German influence, particularly that of Pestalozzi, was a factor in popularizing these synthetic systems. An early American application was made in The Lafayette Primer (1824),⁴ where words

¹Alexander Melville Bell, Visible Speech. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1867.

²James W. Shearer, A New System of Phonetics. From a corrected manuscript in the Boston Public Library, copyrighted 1868.

³Isaac Funk, A Teacher's Manual for the Standard First Reader. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1902.

⁴Edward Quin, The Lafayette Primer and New Jersey Instructor. Caldwell, N.J.: S. Gould, 1824.

were built up from easy syllables. The North American Spelling Book,¹ which went through forty editions between 1835 and 1846, had its introductory word building lessons patterned directly after Pestalozzi's letter-word synthesis.² The same principle formed the basis for Parker's Word Builder (1855)³ and Watson's National School Primer (1858).⁴

It was not until 1889, however, that the country became greatly interested in such methods. During the last decade of the century Pollard's synthetic sound system attracted widespread attention. In this system,⁵ Miss Pollard gathered most of the elements of earlier phonic and phonetic plans, and built up the most elaborate synthetic sound method yet produced. But while it undoubtedly trained children in word recognition and oral reading, Pollard's system was so highly mechanized and so lacking in genuine thought content, that it failed to receive lasting favor. Too many other views regarding the teaching of beginners were current in 1890 to afford much chance to a reactionary system patterned so closely after sixteenth century techniques.

In concluding this survey of synthetic methods, it must be kept in mind that important elements of each have been absorbed into the eclectic methods of the present day.

¹L. W. Leonard, The North American Spelling Book. Conformed to Worcester's Dictionary. Keene, N.H.: G. Tilden, 1846.

²J. H. Pestalozzi, Anweisung zum Buchstabieren und Lesen-lehren. Bern, 1801.

³Richard G. Parker, The Word Builder, or First Lessons in Reading. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1855.

⁴James Madison Watson, The National School Primer, or Primary Word Builder. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1858.

⁵Rebecca S. Pollard, A Complete Manual for Pollard's Synthetic Method of Reading and Spelling, p. 3. Chicago: Western Publishing House, 1889.

CHAPTER X

ANALYTIC METHODS IN AMERICA DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The contribution of American educators to the development of analytic methods has been fully as significant as that of Lubinus, Comenius, Gedike, Wood, Jacotot, Olivier, and others discussed in Chapter IV. To these Europeans, a debt of honor is due for their early suggestions. Nevertheless, many new refinements in both theory and practice have been contributed by American educators of the nineteenth century.

Further consideration of the evolution of analytic methods requires attention to three basic procedures, the word, sentence, and story techniques. Chapter X deals with these three in the order named. Each of them was based upon the general principle that reading should be considered as a thought-getting process, and that the child should deal first with interesting content within his comprehension.

Early Advocates of the Word Method

One of the first American advocates of the word method was John M. Keagy. As early as 1819, he attacked the traditional procedure for teaching beginners, and said:

After becoming acquainted with the alphabet and the manner of forming the letters on a slate, we would first write down the simplest words and after ascertaining well their meaning, make short phrases of them, exemplifying their use. Not a single word should be brought under the notice of the pupil which he would not be made fully to understand. We should at first keep almost exclusively to words denoting material objects and their qualities. We should then gradually introduce other terms, and write phrases on them in the same way, and thus proceed through the whole language. These exercises would perhaps occupy two or three years from the age of five or seven to nine or ten.¹

¹John M. Keagy, An Essay on English Education, p. 19. Harrisburg: John Wyeth, 1824. Reprinted from The Morning Chronicle of Baltimore in the spring of 1819.

In 1826 Samuel Worcester prepared a beginner's book¹ which abandoned the common manner of teaching spelling before reading, and presented whole words first. The first lesson included nine three-letter words, with a picture of an object alongside the appropriate word. Worcester's directions to teachers contained the essence of the word method.

In teaching this and the next lesson, the instructor must name the words, and let the scholar repeat them after him. Then the letters of which each word is composed must be learned and the scholar must be shown what those letters make when sounded together, and the meaning of the word must be illustrated by the cut, and by remarks and anecdotes tending to amuse and interest the child. When the scholar knows a word, and the letters of which it is composed, he may be required to spell it. In order to give him a distinct idea of the difference between reading a word and spelling it, require a scholar that understands you to read a word in a book. Say "That is the way to read it." Then let the same scholar close the book and name the letters of the word and pronounce it. Call that spelling, or the way to spell it. Repeat the method a few times and then require the little child to do the same.

. . . . Let the teacher remember that a suitable portion for one lesson or exercise is first to be read by the scholar, if the scholar can read it; if the scholar cannot read it, the teacher must read it until the scholar can do so.

The letters of each word are next to be learned, and the words carefully pronounced.

The sense of the words is to be given, so far as it can be.

And finally, the scholar is to select from the spelling lesson the word which corresponds to each cut and spell it both in the common way and with checks.²

Because of his primer, and his directions for using it, Worcester is usually regarded as the author of the word method in America. It was not long, however, until the basic principles he stressed were applied in other textbooks. Keagy's The Pestalozzian Primer (1827)³ was a significant volume which aimed to exercise

¹Samuel Worcester, A Primer of the English Language for the Use of Families and Schools. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, 1826.

²Ibid., pp. 13-4.

³John M. Keagy, The Pestalozzian Primer. Harrisburg: John S. Wiestling, 1827.

the thinking powers of the child, and at the same time gratify his desire for information. Like Worcester, Keagy introduced whole words first, associating them with pictures or objects as advocated by Comenius and Pestalozzi. Keagy used only the most familiar words from the child's vocabulary. Only when the child could read a series of them with facility was word analysis undertaken.

The word method was given considerable prominence by J. L. Parkhurst in The American Annals of Education. In 1833, he published a detailed account of how he had taught his child to read by the new system.¹ At the end of four months, according to careful count, his pupil knew 600 words and could read fluently in Worcester's primer and other easy books. The connection or sense of the reading lessons seemed to assist the child in deciphering new and difficult words, and the association of ideas in remembering them.²

At about the same time, T. H. Gallaudet developed a variation of the word method which made much use of flash cards to stimulate word recognition. Gallaudet also stressed the use of script, and had the child copy words and sentences after the manner of Pestalozzi³ and Froebel,⁴ and designed The Mother's Primer⁵ to assist in the introductory stages of learning. His

¹J. L. Parkhurst, "Practical Lessons in Reading," American Annals of Education, III (January, 1833), 36.

²Ibid.

³J. Pestalozzi, How Gertrude Teaches Her Children, p. 126. Trans. L. Holland. London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., 1900.

⁴Friedrich Froebel, The Education of Man (1827), par. 103. Trans. Wm. Hailmann, p. 324. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1887.

⁵T. H. Gallaudet, The Mother's Primer. New York: Nafish and Cornish, 1840.

chief contribution, however, was The Child's Picture and Defining Book,¹ which was unusually attractive in form and content, and came to be widely used as a word method textbook.

Merriam's The Easy Primer,² Holbrook's Penny Tracts,³ and Cobb's Toys,⁴ were among the early productions which introduced whole words at the outset. An outstanding volume of 1838 was Bumstead's My First School Book,⁵ which grouped its words according to sense rather than sound, and disregarded the traditional idea that a word is easy because it is short. Bumstead eventually designed a series of primary readers which were widely used. His was a pure word method. He used no word lists, no aids to pronunciation, no illustrations, no definitions, no check questions, no rhyming alphabets. Following Pestalozzian doctrine, he began with familiar household words, names of things, actions, processes and relations with which the child was familiar, and then proceeded to words less familiar.

The word method rapidly gained favor. Cyrus Pierce, Thomas Palmer, Horace Mann, and other leaders of the educational revival lost no opportunity to advocate its use. But as early as 1833, Parkhurst suggested that it would be most efficient when supplemented by the phonic plan. Pierce, in 1843, took the same

¹T. H. Gallaudet, The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book. Hartford: F. J. Huntington, Third Edition, 1833.

²George Merriam, The Easy Primer. Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam, 1833.

³Josiah Holbrook, Penny Tracts for Children, Containing Lessons for Self Instruction in Reading. Boston: Carter, Hendee & Co., 1833.

⁴Lyman Cobb, Cobb's Toys. New York: Keese & Co., 1835.

⁵J. F. Bumstead, My First School Book. Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1838.

position, as did also Horace Mann in his seventh annual report (1843). More and more this idea was accepted, until by 1850 it was quite common to hear of a combined word-phonetic technique. So-called word-method books began to include suggestions for phonetic analysis. Of this type was John's First Book (1846)¹ by J. Russell Webb, self-styled "author of the word method." Other books tried to bridge the gap between the word method and the traditional spelling technique by making much use of pictures and interspersing word lists among the reading lessons. Typical of this sort was Sanders' A Pictorial Primer (1846).² The use of pictures was still further extended in Tower's A Pictorial Primer (1856),³ which had all of the text, rather than just certain words, illustrated.

By 1850, many city school systems had officially adopted the word method, typical ones being Boston,⁴ Oswego,⁵ and Cleveland.⁶ But after 1860, even where the word method was nominally adopted, it was quite common to find a combination procedure in actual use.

¹J. R. Webb, John's First Book. Watertown, New York, 1846.

²Charles W. Sanders, A Pictorial Primer. New York: M. H. Newman & Co., 1846.

³David B. Tower, A Pictorial Primer. Boston: Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Co., 1856.

⁴Common School Journal, V (December, 1843), 361.

⁵E. A. Sheldon, Manual for Teachers. p. 10. New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1875.

⁶A. Friese, "How Children Learn to Read in Cleveland, Ohio." Massachusetts Teacher, IX (April, 1856), 182-4.

The Sentence Method in America

Our European ancestors did very little to establish the sentence method. Nor was the method popular in America until a comparatively recent date. In a few instances some non-conformist author or publisher ventured to suggest it.

An early champion (1829) of emphasis upon sentences in the first stages of instruction was J. L. Parkhurst, whose experiments with the word method have already been mentioned. He insisted that words should be read in sentences before they were either read or spelled in detached form.¹ Another suggestion which anticipated the sentence method came from William Russell in 1830.² His plan was to provide the teacher with a blackboard, and well drawn or printed illustrations of various objects, intelligible and interesting to children. These illustrations were to be made the basis for questions by the teacher. The ideas given by the children were to be embodied by the teacher, in a few short and easy sentences printed upon the blackboard. Every sentence was then to be slowly and distinctly read aloud by the teacher, and repeated by the children. When the sentences were clearly understood, they were to be analyzed into words, and later into letters and sounds. Ultimately, books were to replace the blackboard exercises.

Russell was much interested in the infant schools of his day and, because of his influence, this sentence approach to reading was frequently used in such schools.

James Mott, in 1840, prepared a book "calculated to communicate ideas which the child can understand from the com-

¹American Annals of Education, III (January, 1833), 36.

²William Russell, "The Infant School System of Education," Proceedings of American Institute of Instruction, 1830, pp. 98-121.

mencement."¹ It too began with complete sentences rather than phrases or words, so that the beginner might make sense of what was read. This book contained no illustrations, no marks or definitions, no word lists. The lessons were presumed to contain enough appeal to motivate the child's learning.

There were suggestions of the sentence method in an anonymous primer of 1847,² which directed the teacher to read each sentence as a whole several times over before the pupil read it. When the child knew it thoroughly, he was supposed to write it, and build it from letter cards. Willson's primer of 1860³ likewise stressed this approach through imitation. The pupil might read several pages by rote before he knew any of the letters or could spell the words.

The early sentence method seems to have stressed two basic objectives, (1) the association of thought in words and sentences, and (2) the improvement of the child's oral reading through imitation of the teacher. But while the thought expressed in the sentence was considered of extreme importance, there was little in the early method to insure that the thought was of special interest to the child.

G. L. Farnham of Binghamton, New York, was largely responsible for the enthusiasm for the sentence method which became noticeable in the late nineteenth century. He presented his plan in detail⁴ before the National Education Association in

¹James Mott, Primary Reading Lessons. New York: Taylor and Clement, 1840.

²Sequel to the Fount. New York: C. Shepard, 1847.

³Marcus Willson, The School and Family Primer. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1860.

⁴G. L. Farnham, "The Thought and Sentence Method," Addresses and Journal of Proceedings of the National Education Association, 1873: 199-207.

1873, and later prepared a pamphlet containing an exposition of it. The underlying principle of his method was that the complete thought, and then the complete sentence as the expression of the thought, should be made the basis for instruction in reading. The sentence was considered, not as a series of word sounds or names, but rather as the sum total of these elements spoken so as to express a particular meaning.

Farnham's procedure, like Russell's, began with conversation and object lessons. Later, thoughts were formed through the use of language rather than objects. By indirect methods, the child thus acquired a graphic vocabulary sufficient to express many simple thoughts without having his attention directed to the elements of the sentence. When easy sentences could be read as units, the analysis of sentences into words, letters, and sounds followed.

It soon became apparent that Farnham's method was weak on the side of phonic analysis, hence teachers began to supplement it, too, with elements of other methods. Its outstanding contribution to present day technique was its emphasis upon a larger unit of thought content during the introductory stages of learning to read.

The Story Method

Building upon this demand for more interesting thought content, several educators began to advocate teaching beginners by first presenting stories rather than sentences. The story method made its strongest appeal to teachers who wished to perpetuate our heritage in the field of children's literature, and by means of selected readings build up desirable character traits in children. It received active support from the Herbartians of

the late nineteenth century, especially those who believed in the use of whole classics even in the introductory stages of reading. Fairy tales and nursery rhymes formed a satisfactory basis for such lessons.

In this method, the story was first told in simple form by the teacher, and repeated by the children until memorization of its details was attained. It was then reproduced in childish language upon the blackboard, and read and reread by the class. Finally it was analyzed sentence by sentence into its component parts, as in the sentence method.

Several educators, of whom Miss Badlam¹ was typical, believed in having children build up whole stories out of their own experiences, in order to insure a positive thought content. It was expected that they would be very familiar with the elements of such stories before being put into a situation where reading was a natural outcome. Aside from the selection of the content, the basic principles in Miss Badlam's method were similar to those just described.

By 1890, the important features of both synthetic and analytic methods were fairly well understood by progressive teachers. There had been for years a tendency in the best schools to incorporate certain elements of a number of different teaching techniques into what had come to be known as an "eclectic" method. The trend in this direction set in during the Educational Revival. The story of its development forms the basis for Chapter XI.

¹Anna B. Badlam, Suggestive Lessons in Language and Reading, p. 30. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1886.

CHAPTER XI

THE TREND TOWARD AN ECLECTIC METHOD

The history of teaching reading during the second half of the nineteenth century is largely the story of the change in emphasis from one method to another. It was no longer common for anyone to advertise, as did Perry, "the only sure way" to teach reading.¹ The basic principles of method were, to be sure, described in many textbooks, but the skilled teacher's technique was quite certain to include features of both synthetic and analytic procedures. In the last quarter-century, the term "eclectic" came into general use to indicate such a combination method.

General method in reading, from 1830 to 1880, was powerfully affected by Pestalozzian doctrines. Between 1880 and 1910 Herbartian theories were widely accepted. Froebel's influence, above the kindergarten level, was not a great factor until after 1900, nor was that of those European investigators concerned with the laboratory study of instructional procedures. Yet all of these things, and many more, contributed to the general evolution of eclectic methods.

One of the earliest advocates of a combination method was Comenius, whose plan included important elements of the phonic, word, and sentence techniques.² In America, the first sponsor of such a procedure appears to have been Parkhurst.³ Along with the

¹See p. 37.

²J. A. Comenius, Preface to Orbis Pictus. English Edition of 1659. Reprint, Syracuse: J. W. Bardeen, 1891.

³Teachers' Guide and Parents' Assistant, I (July, 1827), 234.

presentation of words as wholes, preferably in sentences, Parkhurst taught his pupil to recognize and sound the letters in various combinations.

An interesting combination of methods was incorporated in a series of introductory books¹ prepared about 1840 by William Ballantine. He emphasized first the teaching of whole words, using Wood's "explanatory method"² to make their meaning clear. He next introduced the elements of writing and presented the words in script to be copied after the German reading-writing plan.³ In another column, words were marked diacritically. The reading exercises were simplified much through the inclusion in each selection of several words having the same phonic elements. The final section of the book was intended to fit either Pestalozzi's picture-observation lessons or Wood's explanatory method. The whole scheme was obviously designed to apply the features of the principal techniques being discussed about 1840.

Another famous advocate of a combination method was Cyrus Pierce, Principal of the Normal School at Lexington.⁴ His system included oral conversation, object lessons, word study, blackboard and flash card drills, reading words in sentences and stories, questioning to check comprehension, and many other phases of instruction still valued today.

¹William Ballantine, Key's Infant and Primary School Reader. In three parts. Philadelphia: James Kay & Bro., 1840.

²John Wood, An Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School, p.112. Boston: Monroe & Francis, 1830.

³F. C. Honcamp, "Instruction in Reading," Barnard's American Journal of Education, IV (September, 1857), 234-6.

⁴Cyrus Pierce, "Reading," Proceedings of American Institute of Instruction, XIV (1843), 149-53.

John's First Book¹ by J. R. Webb is sometimes referred to as the earliest word-method primer. In reality it was a good illustration of an eclectic primer, which emphasised a variety of procedures. It ran much the same gamut as did Ballantine's earlier series, beginning with the study of words, presenting next the sounds and their combinations on the approved phonic plan, and concluding with what Webb called the "union method" which presented the alphabet first and most of the features of the traditional primer. The only customs of contemporary method which Webb ignored were the use of pictorial illustrations which, he announced, were injurious to the child's mind; and the use of capital letters except in proper names. Webb went farther than most authors of his day in providing directions to teachers. He was evidently very conscious of the importance of method in the early stages of instruction.

Books on a combination plan became fairly common after 1840. Significant volumes were Sanders' A Pictorial Primer (1846),² Howard's The Child's First Book (1847),³ and Tower's The Gradual Primer (1853),⁴ all of which attained great popularity.

Influence of the Oswego Movement

With the rise of the Oswego Movement about 1860, eclectic methods took a new hold upon the teaching profession. In one of the earliest experiments of its sort, the school system at Oswego

¹J. R. Webb, John's First Book. Watertown, N.Y., 1846.

²Charles W. Sanders, A Pictorial Primer. New York: M. H. Newman & Co., 1846.

³Jerome B. Howard, The Child's First Book of Reading and Drawing. New York: Gates and Stedman, 1847.

⁴David B. Tower, The Gradual Primer. Boston: Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Co., 1853.

set out to compare the relative advantages of the word, phonic, and phonetic methods of instruction through tests in the classroom. As a result, a combined word-phonetic system was adopted.

The Oswego plan with its Pestalozzian background was chiefly oral in nature. It stressed words as the signs of objects, actions and qualities. In addition to much preliminary conversation and observation, there was also much drill upon the sounds of the language. Words were next analyzed according to their sound elements, and spelled both by sound and letter names. The form of the words was taught by copying them upon a slate. Finally, children learned to read words in phrases and sentences.

Because of the widespread influence of the Oswego Movement, this general method of instruction in beginning reading was widely used. New York,¹ Chicago,² and other cities followed it exclusively for a few years.

It must not be supposed, however, that the alphabetic method, much as it had been assailed, was easily superseded. Webster's speller and McGuffey's reader still outsold the newer books for beginners, and thousands of teachers knew no others.

Several attempts were made to include elements of the phonetic method in the newer teaching techniques. The use of diacritical marks continued popular. Just after the Civil War, a wave of enthusiasm for Leigh's "pronouncing orthography" swept the country.³ The use of his special type was adopted by many publishers, and the phonetic method was widely acclaimed for several years. The most appealing argument for the use of the

¹N. A. Calkins, "The History of Object Teaching," Barnard's American Journal of Education, XII (December, 1862), 644.

²W. H. Wells, The graded School, p. 13. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1862.

³See p. 73.

new system was that it was possible at the same time to retain the advantages claimed for either the alphabetic, phonic or word method procedures. Leigh's type did not retain its popularity long. There remained, however, as a significant feature of instruction in primary reading, a persistent belief in the efficacy of marks of pronunciation and obliteration. The trend toward the use of such marks was still evident in the early twentieth century.

The period 1875-1885 brought several popular eclectic readers. Among those widely used were The United States First Reader;¹ The American Education Readers, First Year;² Appleton's The First Reader;³ Swinton's A Primer and First Reader;⁴ Lippincott's Popular Series, First Year;⁵ and Barnes' New National First Reader.⁶ The outstanding thing about them all was their claim to meet the needs of any one or all of the current methods of instruction. More and more they stressed a combined analytic-synthetic approach to reading. So powerful was the influence of the earlier ones of this group that McGuffey's The Eclectic First

¹ Marcius Willson, The United States First Reader. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1872.

² American Education Readers, New Graded Series, First Year. New York: Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., 1873.

³ Wm. T. Harris (U. S. Commissioner of Education), Andrew J. Rickoff (Superintendent of Schools, Cleveland), and Mark Bailey (Instructor, Yale College), The First Reader. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1877.

⁴ William Swinton, A Primer and First Reader. New York: Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., 1883.

⁵ Marcius Willson, Lippincott's Popular Series, First Reader. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1881.

⁶ Charles J. Barnes, Harlan H. Ballard, and S. Proctor Thayer, Barnes' New National First Reader. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1883.

Reader was also revised to provide for the new combination method.¹

A Period of Emphasis upon Cultural Reading

Beginning about 1880, Pestalozzian doctrines began to give way noticeably to the Herbartian influences emanating from Jena.² Moral training rather than realism was held up to teachers as the most worthy objective of instruction. In the field of primary reading, subject matter vied with method once more for attention, and a wealth of new selections, fables, folk stories, fairy tales and other types of imaginative literature came into prominence. The reading of whole selections rather than incomplete sections of them was emphasized by Herbartian leaders, and publishers hastened to prepare textbooks at least partially in line with the new theories.

An accompaniment of this development was the rise of the story method as a basic teaching technique. Its use was stimulated by Hall's treatise on teaching reading,³ and by Badlam's description of her story method.⁴ The new element in the method, it should be noted, was the emphasis upon the story as a thought unit.

The trend toward cultural subject matter was given impetus in 1891 by President Eliot's effort to stimulate the study of whole classics.⁵ In the next decade a score of little books for

¹McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader (Revised Edition). Cincinnati: Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., 1879.

²See p. 59.

³G. Stanley Hall, How to Teach Reading and What to Read. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1886.

⁴Anna B. Badlam, Suggestive Lessons in Language and Reading. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1886.

⁵G. E. Hardy, "The Function of Literature in Elementary Schools," Educational Review, II (July, 1891), 145-6.

beginners appeared on the market, among the more significant ones being The Heart of Oak Books, First Year,¹ and Classic Stories for Little Ones.² As a whole these books presented a wealth of cultural literature, especially adapted to the story method of teaching beginners. The trend in this direction was one of the outstanding developments of the late nineteenth century.

New Supplementary Reading Materials

The last quarter-century saw also the growth of another practice in teaching beginners,- the use of supplementary readers. At least four factors were responsible for this trend: (1) the increased emphasis upon reading selections from the classics; (2) the growing interest in natural science as a school subject; (3) the added length of the school year, which together with the new teaching techniques, made it easy to cover the regular text-book in less than a year; and (4) the belief that children would learn to read more rapidly if the vocabulary of the regular text were repeated frequently in other sentences.

Much credit should be given Colonel Francis Parker for his early advocacy³ of supplementary reading books, and for his efforts to provide the right sort of material.⁴ Within a few

¹Charles E. Norton, The Heart of Oak Books, First Year. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1895.

²Lida B. McMurtry, Classic Stories for the Little Ones. Bloomington, Ill.: Public School Publishing Co., 1894.

³Francis W. Parker, Talks on Teaching. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1883.

⁴Francis W. Parker and Louis Marvel, Supplementary Reading for Primary Schools, First Book. Boston: Davis & Co., 1880.

years, supplementary series by Swinton,¹ McGuffey,² and Appleton,³ as well as many single volumes by other authors, were available for children's use. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was common in progressive schoolrooms to have two or three sets of readers to supplement the basic textbooks.

Emphasis Begins to Shift from Oral to Silent Reading

Suggestions that more attention should be given to silent reading were frequently made during the Educational Revival. Palmer, for example, in 1837 advocated it in an address before the American Institute of Instruction;⁴ A. D. Lord, State Superintendent of Schools in Ohio, argued for it in 1847;⁵ and from time to time it was proposed by other educators. But so powerful was the Pestalozzian emphasis upon oral reading, that little attention was given before 1880 to silent reading exercises.

Because of the Herbartian influence and the aggressive arguments of Colonel Parker, a slight shift in emphasis became noticeable. The new sentence and story techniques made apparent the advantage of having the child first read silently what he was expected to read orally. Educators began to conceive of reading as a process of thinking, rather than the mere pronunciation of

¹William Swinton and George R. Cathcart, Easy Steps for Little Feet. Swinton's Supplementary Readers, First Book. New York: Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., 1880.

²McGuffey's Alternate First Reader. Cincinnati: Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., 1887.

³Rebecca D. Rickoff, Appleton's Chart-Primer. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1884.

⁴T. H. Palmer, "On the Evils of the Present System of Primary Instruction," Proceedings of American Institute of Instruction, 1837, pp. 211-39.

⁵Asa D. Lord, "Reading," Ohio School Journal, II (January, 1847), 61.

words. Within a few years this new theory began to manifest itself in beginner's reading books.

Davis, in 1889,¹ was one of the earliest to suggest that each sentence first be read silently by the child. The same technique was advocated by Cyr (1891)² and Ward (1894).³ Cyr's Primer provided several silent reading lessons to check pupils' comprehension through their ability to follow directions and fill in completion exercises. The Riverside Primer⁴ went much farther and made silent reading exercises its fundamental objective.

As the century closed, there were evidences of the Froebelian influence which later gave rise to the activity movement. Checking comprehension in silent reading called for child activity of a new sort, and various types of interpretation were introduced. This phase of method, however, reached its greatest development in the third decade of the twentieth century.

The Situation in 1900

In the general technique of the teacher of 1900, many evidences of the earlier Pestalozzian emphasis upon the study of objects and the realities of the child's environment persisted. These evidences were manifested particularly in the oral conversation and language lessons designed to pave the way for the introduction of reading. On the other hand, the trend toward the

¹Eben H. Davis, The Beginners' Reading Book. New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1889.

²Ellen M. Cyr, The Children's Primer. Boston: Ginn and Co., 1891.

³E. G. Ward, The Rational Method of Reading, A Manual of Instruction for the Use of Teachers. New York: Silver Burdett & Co., 1894.

⁴I. F. Hall, The Riverside Primer and Reader. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1891.

use of cultural material prompted her to make use of the nursery jingles and imaginative literature which the child had heard before coming to school. In either case she was expected to make sure that a genuine thought content was provided as a basis for introducing reading.

In the better schools, the teacher began with some analytic method, word, sentence, or story, and proceeded later to phonic analysis and spelling. She gave considerable attention to marks of pronunciation, and made correct oral reading a prominent objective. If very progressive, she introduced a few silent reading exercises to check the comprehension of her pupils. She might even insist that every sentence be read silently before being read orally.

In her classroom one found several sets of supplementary readers, designed to provide a wealth of easy reading material. Her constant endeavor was to simplify the introductory stages of reading and make sure that they were adapted to the abilities and comprehension of the individual children with whom she worked.

Her procedure had a place for dramatization, constructive hand work, and other forms of expression and interpretation by the child. Indications of socialization and cooperative effort might be noted among the children.

The trend in 1900 obviously was toward the inclusion in method of the best suggestions of recent years. The progressive teacher followed an "eclectic" method. The fact that it emphasized either an analytic-synthetic or a synthetic-analytic approach determined its principal characteristics.

CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing discussion has brought to light many interesting developments in the field of beginning reading. It has been shown beyond a doubt that many motives, methods, and materials now accepted as commonplace in instruction are the result of years, even centuries, of evolution, and that we are under a great debt to our European ancestors for the heritage handed on to twentieth century schools. By way of recapitulation, certain elements of this heritage are summarized according to the historical period when they were most significant.

The Greeks emphasized both cultural and utilitarian values in reading. They built up a large body of literature, of which the fables have been most widely used in books for beginners. They developed an alphabetic-syllabic-spelling method of instruction. Aristophanes' system of diacritical marks proved to be widely used. Occasionally the Greeks livened learning by dramatization.

The Romans followed in general the motives and methods of the Greeks. Their chief contribution to content was the moral tale. The Roman attitude toward children was less severe than that of the Greeks. They began the substitution of exhortation and reason for whipping and severe punishment with small children. Plutarch, Horace, and Quintilian made many valuable suggestions regarding methods with beginners.

Intellectual life in the Middle Ages centered in the church. Through the monastic schools, the methods of teaching reading practiced by the Romans were introduced to western Europe. For a thousand years and more, learning to read Latin by the

alphabet method was the outstanding activity of primary education.

With the rise of new social and industrial classes after the Renaissance, instruction in the vernacular came into vogue. The invention of printing and paper made cheaper books possible, and a new interest in learning to read resulted. The hornbook was invented about 1450 as an instrument of instruction. The fifteenth century brought also a new art in the illustration of books by means of wood cuts. The first illustrated ABC book was a product of the fifteenth century.

The Reformation established a new religious motive for learning to read, and the study of the scriptures furnished both the means and end of reading. Children and adults studied the same religious books. The sixteenth century brought many suggestions for improvement in the methods and materials of instruction.

The principal contributions to progress may be summarized as a new emphasis upon reading in the vernacular, especially in the volksschule and the dame schools; the extension of both religious and realistic content in schoolbooks; the beginning of the phonic and phonetic methods; the extension of monitorial instruction; the preparation of numerous books for children; the adoption of milder methods of discipline; and a growing realization that early education should be pleasant and interesting, rather than repressive.

Several interesting developments took place in the seventeenth century. Of major significance were the movement to substitute subject matter of interest to children for the religious content which dominated books for beginners; the increased use of the mother tongue rather than the ancient languages in early instruction; the rise of the spelling book as an important competitor of the traditional primer; the invention of the battledore

to replace the hornbook; a great advance in the use of illustrations as an aid to learning; repeated efforts to perfect the phonic method and a phonetic alphabet; and the preparation of several professional books dealing with techniques for teaching beginners to read.

Eighteenth century advances of greatest importance may be summarized as the movement to replace religious subject matter by moral, realistic, or amusing reading lessons; the notable development of spelling books with systematic emphasis upon pronunciation and syllabic spelling; the great increase in interesting books for children to use outside of school; the beginnings of the infant school movement in France; the extension of monitorial instruction; the beginnings of educational psychology; and the formulation of the phonetic method by Edgeworth and the word method by Gedike.

Nineteenth century European influences were many and varied. Those of most importance were doubtless the new educational doctrines of Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel; the emphasis upon the word, phonic, phonetic and sentence methods; the publication of books for children applying these methods; and the laboratory studies of processes involved in reading.

Developments in America

The colonial period in America was one of general dependence upon Europe for materials and methods of instruction. The colonial dame school was patterned after its English namesake. Even that outstanding American achievement, The New England Primer, was decidedly like its prototype, The Protestant Tutor. The outstanding American contribution to the teaching of beginning reading was Webster's American Spelling Book of 1790, which set

the style in both content and method for many years to come. A few other American spelling books feebly competed with it for the favor of the new nation.

Academic interest, at least, attaches to the early efforts of Franklin, Chambers, and Thornton to develop a phonetic alphabet for use in America. None of these schemes was particularly significant.

The early nineteenth century was marked by a low ebb in educational affairs. The district school system was not conducive to progress. There was great inequality of educational opportunity. School buildings were poorly constructed and maintained, supplies and equipment were inadequate, teachers as a rule poorly prepared for their work, parents indifferent, and conditions generally unsatisfactory.

Books for beginners as a rule continued the eighteenth century style. Two new trends, however, were noticeable: a continued simplification of the reading lessons, and a growing tendency to use a separate reading book before introducing the speller. From 1820 to 1830, the spelling books were generally cheap, unattractive, and difficult of comprehension, whereas many of the other books for beginners improved in appearance and educational value. There was a growing tendency to indicate pronunciation by means of the ancient diacritical marks. Strictly religious subject matter continued to give way to moralistic and naturalistic content.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century brought a great educational awakening. New school buildings, better trained teachers, and new educational attitudes on the part of both parents and teachers, resulted in greatly improved conditions. A concerted attack was made upon the alphabet method with

beginners. The phonic method found many sponsors, and new phonic primers were published by Lamb, Mulkey, Parsons, and others. At the same time Keagy, Worcester, Gallaudet, Merriam, Bumstead, and Webb were experimenting with the word method. Advocates of the phonetic method, spurred by the system of Pitman and Ellis in England, prepared new primers in phonetic type. Notable examples were the phonetic readers of Comstock and Longley. Other educators produced new primers based on Pestalozzi's synthetic word building plan. All in all, this era was one of intense interest and marked progress. Normal schools were opened, educational periodicals and professional books were published, and the general level of instruction was noticeably raised.

The third quarter century opened with intense enthusiasm for phonotypy and its use in beginning reading. Shortly after the Civil War, Leigh's pronouncing orthography emphasized it again. Phonetic systems, however, never seemed able to overcome the existing alphabet. The period 1860-1880 was one of great interest in Pestalozzian doctrines. A happier pupil-teacher relationship, a decided trend toward conversation based on observation, and more carefully graded reading material, were significant results. A definite trend toward a combination or eclectic method set in, and various schemes were developed for utilizing the best practices from abroad, as well as at home. The emphasis shifted more and more from the earlier synthetic methods to the more recent analytic ones, but progressive teachers used their own judgment in combining the various proposals. Throughout this period, German influence continued to play a prominent part in directing American educational thought.

There had been for some years a growing emphasis upon reading for comprehension, as well as expression. In 1873,

Farnham proposed his sentence method for beginners. While many teachers accepted it enthusiastically, others felt that it was deficient in phonic analysis. Its chief contribution to general method was the insistence upon a simple, rational thought content in the introductory stages of reading.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century was marked by the publication of many new books for beginners, representing a great variety of methods and content. The trend was toward better illustrations, larger, clearer type, fewer words per page, and a better grade of paper. Color printing became fairly common in the decade 1890-1900.

By 1890 the sentence-word-phonics technique had come into general favor. Pestalozzian object lessons continued popular, with new emphasis upon blackboard sketching. A word study period for each lesson, silent reading before oral, and the expression of each sentence as a whole to insure thought getting, were new elements of general method. The introduction of fewer words per lesson, and more careful provision for reviews, were also being advocated.

As greater stress was placed upon reading for comprehension, added attention was given to silent reading lessons. During the last decade several new primers were prepared to encourage this technique, and by 1900 a definite trend toward silent reading had set in. An accompaniment of this movement was an increased interest in seat work and various interpretative activities related to reading. Froebelian influence, supplemented by that of Parker and Dewey, was just beginning to manifest itself in this field as the nineteenth century closed.

With the Herbartian influence came a decided swing toward the use of nursery rhymes and cumulative tales in beginners' books,

for the purpose of developing a permanent interest in good literature. Closely related to this change, were two other significant trends. The story method, which seemed peculiarly adapted to teaching the new literature, was introduced in many schools. Moreover, the vocabulary of primers was supplemented by many words from the new literature, and thus became much more appealing than that of earlier synthetic textbooks.

Beginning about 1880, there developed a new interest in supplementary readers. Colonel Parker lent his influence to a movement to supply a wealth of easy reading materials for primary grades, in which adequate word repetition should be provided through interesting content. By 1900, most progressive schools had accepted the plan of having sets of supplementary readers in each primary classroom.

The teaching of beginning reading was greatly stimulated by the child-study movement which began about 1879 under the leadership of G. Stanley Hall. It was even more affected by the new psychology expounded by James, Judd, Thorndike, and other young American scholars. Perhaps most significant of all the developments of this period, were the efforts of educational psychologists to investigate scientifically in the laboratory the whole process of how one learns to read.

Paralleling the new psychology, a new educational philosophy was being formulated by Parker, Dewey, and others. Most important for beginning reading were their applications of the early doctrines of Locke, Rousseau, Froebel, and others who believed in child activity in a social setting as the true basis for education. As the century closed, a new field of procedure was being explored, eventually to result in the activity method of the present day.

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